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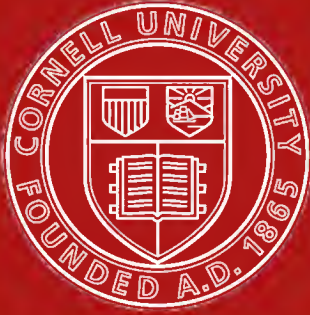
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Historic Houses
of
SOUTH AFRICA



NEETHLING'S HOF

From the oil-painting by R. Gwelo Goodman

Historic Houses of SOUTH AFRICA

By DOROTHEA FAIRBRIDGE

with a Preface

by

GENERAL J. C. SMUTS

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In the preparation of this book valuable assistance has been given by many people.

To Lady Phillips it owes the pictures in colour which have been painted by Gwelo Goodman; to F. Glennie, a well-known Cape Architect and secretary to the National Society, the architectural drawings; to Arthur Elliott, Montrose Cloete, E. Steer, and H. Edwards many of the illustrations, and to the Cape Times permission to reproduce the drawings of the late G. S. Smithard.

It has also found friends in Holland, in Jonkheer van Riemsdyk and Mynheer van Notten of the Ryks-Museum, Amsterdam, who supplied information regarding the van Riebeeck portrait and old Cape-Dutch furniture; and in Jonkheer Six of Amsterdam; Mynheer Jurriaan van Toll, of the Royal Library at the Hague, and Dr. H. A. Lorentz, for help in tracing the genealogy of the van der Stel family, while assistance has also been given by Mr. Graham Botha and Miss Jeffreys of the Cape Archives on many historical points; also by Mr. Cornish-Bowden, Surveyor-General, Mr. Fleming, and other officials in his department.

Those who are familiar with the old Cape houses will realize that it has not been possible to refer to every interesting house. In some cases, even when the historical associations are of value, the building itself has lost its beauty through accident or alteration, and even while this book has been in the press some of the houses described in it have been altered to their disadvantage, though in a few instances others have been skilfully restored by new owners.

D. F.

CLAREMONT,
CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

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FOREWORD

MISS FAIRBRIDGE, who is a keen and loving student of our South African past, has written this interesting and valuable book on old Cape Architecture. She has asked me to say a few words by way of introduction. Although I have no qualifications for the honour thus thrust upon me, I feel I may not refuse it.

The old Dutch homesteads of South Africa deserve to be better known than they are. In a country where, as a rule, Nature is everything and Art literally nowhere, our old Dutch houses form the most notable exception to the rule. The genius of South Africa has shown itself in action—in great deeds, heroic sacrifices, and gifts of leadership—rather than in the domain of Art. Neither in Music nor in Literature nor in Painting nor in Sculpture have we anything yet to compare with the performance of older countries. The one exception is our domestic architecture, and there our production is of a unique character. I believe it was Ruskin who said that the only real contribution to Architecture for the last few centuries has been made by the Dutch in South Africa—or something to that effect. And the truth of this will be clear to all who have studied the noble houses built at the Cape in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Since then our taste has been debauched by the commonplace or hideous types introduced from abroad. It is only quite recently that Mr. Herbert Baker has taken us back to the old Cape style, and has popularized its distinctive features in many a beautiful house in most parts of South Africa.

In the book before us Miss Fairbridge endeavours to trace the origin and growth of this distinctive old Dutch style, and gives us numerous examples of its best achievements.

It is evident that this noble architecture could only have arisen in times of comparative quiet and leisure. And of this there must

have been plenty in the secluded sun-filled valleys of the Cape in those far-off times.

The earliest settlers do not seem to have had the strenuous struggle for existence which marks many new countries and must have had time for the amenities of life. People hurried and urged by violent competition have not the time to consider the artistic effect of their houses or to plan gardens in which to enjoy leisure. Such are usually found in what are called the older countries. It will, therefore, probably come as a surprise to the reader of this book, who is not a South African, to find houses and estates dating back to within a century of van Riebeeck having the appearance of a mellowed antiquity. This book is an attempt to preserve or, at any rate, to record what is most noteworthy in our older South African architecture and domestic surroundings.

Those who have seen the awful destruction of the Great War and the absolute obliteration of everything in what were some of the most beautiful districts of Europe will appreciate the necessity for recording by pen and pencil the works of a period in South Africa while these remain to us. Even in this uncrowded land the hand of the builder and restorer is heavy, and even while I write, some beautiful building may be defaced.

This is often done simply because the attention of the would-be improver has not been directed to the beauties of what he possesses, and he does not see that what is consecrated by the taste of one age is not lightly to be touched by the hand of another. The old houses of South Africa are a common heritage of which all South Africans are proud, and are precious links binding us all together in noble traditions and great memories of our past.

From the tragedy which has convulsed the older world we look with thankfulness at our own South Africa, with her mysterious compelling attraction, her peace, the great gifts that Providence has showered upon her. The youngest of the sister nations which form the British Empire, she may take her place with dignity amongst them, sorrowfully proud in her sons who have died to uphold her good name and maintain her honour and fealty.

This South Africa of ours lies far from the Europe to which she

is, for the greater part, only a name, and her history but a vague impression, but she has a story of which no country need be ashamed. It is, for the greater part, a record of struggles in the face of difficulties, and of those difficulties overcome and shaped to noble uses, even as the dogged spirit in which her two white races more than once met in collision is being fused into an equally determined spirit of patriotism which has a wider outlook than that of race. Her foundations were well and truly laid by the men and women who gave their lives to planting the standard of civilization in a wild and distant country, and we, who are their heirs, owe to them not only our spiritual environment but also our wide vineyards, our fruitful orchards, and the houses in which they lived.

This book is concerned principally with these houses and with the people who built them. It may serve a twofold purpose. In the first place it may help to carry across the seas something of the spirit of South Africa, so that our sister nations may know the beauty that lies in her old homesteads and the charm that lingers in her vine-covered stoeps and in the villages set about with orchards. South Africa has a great heritage, a fine tradition which has come down to the present day with the houses which were thriving homesteads years before Peter the Great founded St. Petersburg, and we who love her would have her beauty and her charm known in the ends of the earth. But, in the second place, the book has a message for our own people too, and above all for those who have too lightly valued an architecture which is in many ways unique in the world. If the calamities which have fallen upon some of the old houses, either through neglect or through wanton destruction, are a cause for regret, there is also cause for hope in the awakening consciousness of the people of South Africa to the value of these homesteads. In a world which, for the moment, has lost much of its beauty, let us help to keep alive respect for the old buildings which are not only charming and pleasant and peculiar to the country, but are also shrines of the spirit of our forefathers and of their faith in the land which is our home.

J. C. SMUTS.

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ERRATUM

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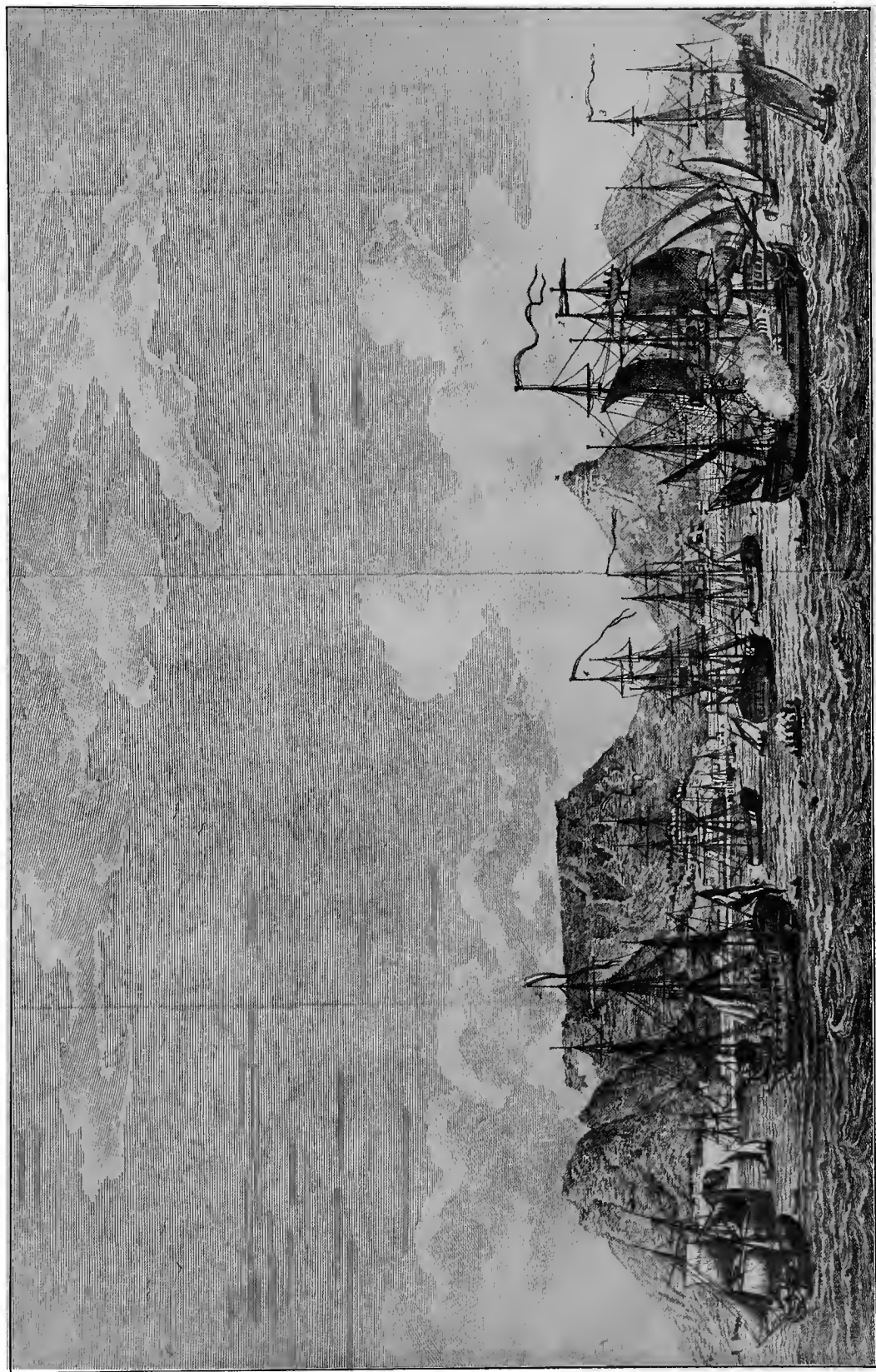


TABLE MOUNTAIN AND CAPE TOWN

From an old print



JOHAN VAN RIEBEECK, 1618-1677

From the original in the
RIJKS MUSEUM, AMSTERDAM

INTRODUCTION

THE ROMANCE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN COAST

But now we had five suns pass over seen
Since thence we had departed, cutting through
Seas which by none had navigated been,
And still the winds all prosperously blew ;
When lo, one night, standing in thought serene,
Watching upon the sharp prow as she flew,
A frowning cloud which darkens all the air
Appears above our heads and hovers there.

The *Lusiads* of Camoens (Aubertin's translation).

IN the cloud seen by Camoens is the Spirit of the Cape of Storms, the giant Adamastor, stern guardian of the road to the Eastern seas. Fiercely he bars the way against Vasco da Gama and his ships. Dread are the curses he calls down on the heads of those Portuguese adventurers of the fifteenth century who—

dare to traverse my unbounded seas,
Which I so long still guard and hold alone.

In the wild south-easter, when the great cloud above Table Mountain blots out the sun and the ships in the bay are blown out to sea, we may still hear the echo of the storm in which the exiled Camoens, sailing round the Cape some sixty years later than da Gama, saw and heard in his dreams the untamed Titan rage against the intrepid explorers who invaded his dominion. We can feel the storm abate as—

with loud weeping dire
Swift from before our eyes he melting fled,
And the black cloud dispersed.

In the unclouded calm that follows we see how the Horses of the Sun—

Pirois, Phlegon, now, and the other two
Came drawing forth the radiant car of day,
When the high headland rose before our view
Whereto the giant vast converted lay.

Only we who know the Cape of Good Hope can read with understanding these stanzas of the poem in which a great Portuguese poet set out to do honour to a great Portuguese sailor. Only we can feel the fierce, dry wind that beat back Vasco da Gama from the Indian Ocean, only we know how the storm spends itself in sobs and gasps, only we have felt the radiance of the days that follow the south-easter, when sea and sky are alike so calmly blue that it is difficult to find the line that divides either from other. We—and Camoens, for we know as we read that he saw with our eyes and heard with our ears.

‘Down there, at the far southern end of the continent,’ writes Professor John Purves, ‘this poet, who was only ours by the slender chances of a voyage, set up a monument of perpetual endurance in the giant figure of Adamastor, the genius of the Cape. The only figure added to mythology since classical times is a South African figure. . . . This great poetical creation left us by Camoens in the sixteenth century is a thing unique in the newer world south of the Line or west of the Atlantic. It stands there to remind us of our portion in the Renaissance, older than Shakespeare’s plays and grandiose like the figures at the gate of Hell in Milton’s epic. The long wave of the classical renaissance slowly creeping round the African coast left this vast relic high and dry on our shores; and although that wave carried other treasures to remoter shores it left nothing more sublime anywhere.’

Led by Camoens we stand in the shadow of Vasco da Gama when he lands at the Bahia St. Bras, our Mossel Bay and the Bahia dos Vaqueiros of the earlier explorer, Bartholomeu Diaz. With him we meet the cheerful little Hottentots who danced for his pleasure and played to him on a reed instrument which—‘called the Muse of Tityrus to mind.’ With him too we land on the island of Sancta Cruz in Algoa Bay, and here at the cross raised by Diaz ten years earlier we do honour to the brave sailor who had in truth found the road to the East, though he thought that he had failed, and made possible this prosperous voyage of 1497. For at this point the journey of Diaz had ended in deep sorrow. His men had mutinied, saying that they had come farther than ever white man had come before and that they must die of hunger if they went on, for it was clear that the coast continued to run east and west, and the road to India seemed to them a veritable will-o’-the-wisp. Diaz persuaded them to go on for a little while, but the winds and the waves were against him and sadly he turned his prow from the East and retraced his way to Europe, first landing on the island of Sancta Cruz, says the old Portuguese historian de Barros, and taking farewell of his cross as a father takes farewell of a dearly-loved child. But he had not looked his last on South Africa, for in the year 1500 he went

down in a great storm off his own Cape of Good Hope, on his way to that India which he never saw, though he held the beacon-light to others. His last cross was erected somewhere in the neighbourhood of Cape Agulhas. Professor Beazley says 'He had discovered 1,260 miles of hitherto unknown coast, and his voyage, taken with the letters soon afterwards received from Pero de Covilhão (who by way of Cairo and Aden had reached Malabar on one side and the Zanzibar coast on the other, as far south as Sofala, in 1487-8) was rightly considered to have solved the question of an ocean route round Africa to the Indies and other lands of South and East Asia'. The one brave sailor-soul must have paid tribute to the other when Vasco da Gama looked on the cross at whose foot Diaz shed those bitter tears of seeming failure. These crosses or *padrões* were planted at different points on the African coastline by order of King John of Portugal, as a sign to the heathen that a Christian nation had set its seal on the land.

From the little island in the 'Bahia da Lagoa' da Gama sailed northward, until the Christmas Day which gave its name to Natal. 'Trazia o Sol o dia celebrado' sings Camoens.

The sun brought back the celebrated day
Whereon three Kings left Eastern parts to find
A new-born King who in his cradle lay,
Which King three others in Himself combined.
This morn we took for anchorage a bay
In the same country we had left behind,
In a large river which we gave a name
Calling the river and the day the same.

The sea-weary men must have looked with longing eyes on the green shores of Natal, but their quest was the road to India, the route by which the ships of Portugal were to bring to Europe the treasures of the East, the silks and spices and precious stones which for centuries had passed by the overland caravans to the ships of rich Venice, and so they sailed on until they came to Malindi and knew that success had crowned their adventure.

A journal of the voyage, known as the *Roteiro*, was kept, and it records their impressions of the South African coast between Algoa Bay and Natal. 'The country about here is very charming and well wooded. We saw much cattle, and the farther we advanced the more did the character of the country improve and the trees increase in size.'

From that date onward the little strip of the Indian Ocean of which I write saw the Portuguese galleons and carracks pass to and

from the East. From the pen of de Barros (1496–1570) we have many stories of the South African coast, and in his pages we may read the tragic tale of the death of the great Portuguese empire-builder, the ex-viceroy Dom Francisco Almeida, and many of the noblest people of his fleet at the hands of the Hottentots on the shores of Table Bay in 1510. From out of the gloom of this tale shines a bright gleam of chivalry. When it was clear that all was lost Dom Jorge de Mello came up to Almeida and spoke bitterly—de Mello was a friend of Albuquerque who had succeeded the deposed Viceroy—taunting him and saying that he should like to see him following his dead followers, those upon whom he had bestowed honour in the days of his own prosperity. Amid the shrieks and the yells and the flying darts the old man turned to him. ‘Senhor Jorge de Mello, those who owe me any favour are already left behind me, this is not a time for these remembrances, but rather should you remember your nobility, and I beg you as a favour to accompany and save the banner of our lord the King, which is being ill-used, as with my years and sins I can end my life here, since it is our Lord’s will.’ Then, says the historian, ‘As long as he was able, Jorge de Mello stood by the flag and by the viceroy until his death.’ Being one of the few who escaped he took command of the fleet and after the natives had retired he landed and buried the slain.

Amongst my father’s manuscripts I have come across the following note, which is of interest in this connexion. Robert Semple was the author of a small book on the Cape, published in 1805.

‘Semple says that in digging the foundation of the houses in the neighbourhood of the Dutch Church several Portuguese tombs were found. Mr. Johannes de Wet thinks that he must have been mistaken, as he was himself informed by the builder of the house in Strand Street now occupied by Messrs. James Searight & Co. that, in excavating the foundations, both of this house as well as of the one where Attwell’s store and steam-mill stand, several Portuguese tomb-stones were found. Mr. de Wet’s theory is that Almeida, Viceroy of India, killed in 1510 with about seventy of his followers, was with the rest of the slain buried at this place. . . . Mr. de Wet thinks that the skirmish in which Almeida was killed was fought on the Flats, near where the old Dutch clinker-built mill stands.’

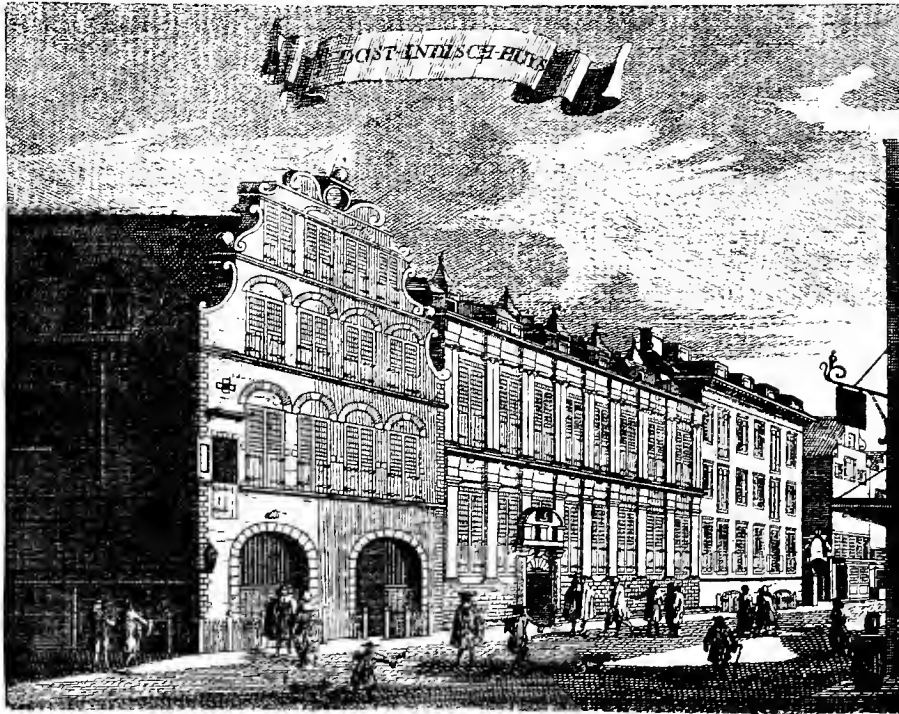
The houses in question stood on sites granted respectively to Johannes Blankenbergh and others in 1709. The former was inhabited in 1751 by the Abbé de la Caille (it was 2 Strand Street) and it was probably in breaking down the older house in the rear, facing Waterkant Street, that the tomb-stones were found. This was in 1816 when the then owner, P. J. de Witt, built a store-house for

merchandise in the rear of his dwelling. If, however, tradition is right in supposing that the fight took place near the Woodstock beaches, and that Almeida and his men were buried where they fell, these stones are a long way from the site. It is possible that they were sent out from Portugal some years later, when the Portuguese landed to avenge the death of Almeida, and that any trace of the place of burial had been lost during the interval. If they were merely left on the shore it is probable that Johannes Blankenbergh regarded them only as convenient foundation stones.

After a time the vision of Portugal passes—that great, adventurous Portugal which was inspired by the spirit of Prince Henry the Navigator. Other ships of other nations were soon contending for the mastery of the road to the East, and following in the wake of the Portuguese came the English. We have a glimpse of Drake as he floats past ‘the fairest cape in the whole circumference of the earth’—in the *Golden Hind*, on returning homewards in 1580 from his voyage round the world. Eleven years later came Captain James Lancaster with his ‘three tall ships’—the first English expedition to India by the sea-route and one that was to prepare the way for the foundation of the East India Company. The Dutch, however, were close behind, and in April 1595 a fleet of four ships under Cornelis Houtman sailed from Holland for the East, guided by a book of sailing instructions drawn up by Jan Huyghen van Linschoten, a Dutchman who had sailed to Goa with the Portuguese fleet in 1583. Houtman’s ships anchored in Diaz’s *Bahia dos Vaqueiros*, the inlet on the South African coast to which the name of Mossel Bay was given by van Caerden in 1601; on their return to Holland they brought back a treaty made with the Sultan of Bantam in Java, and in 1602 the Dutch East India Company was formed.

If I have touched on all these names and dates it has not been for the sake of accumulating dry facts, but because we need to know them if we are to honour these men and to realize something of the sturdy heroism that opened the road to the East. I would gladly linger over the subject and write of Antonio de Saldanha who gave his name to Table Bay in 1503, of Joris van Spilbergen who transferred the name to an inlet farther north, and of many another, heroes all, but there is no space here to chronicle their doings. We must pass them by, but as the modern liner takes us in swiftness and luxury from Cape Town to Natal she is hemmed about by the great shades of the past, and the men who toiled and died that we might travel safely to the ends of the earth must not be forgotten.

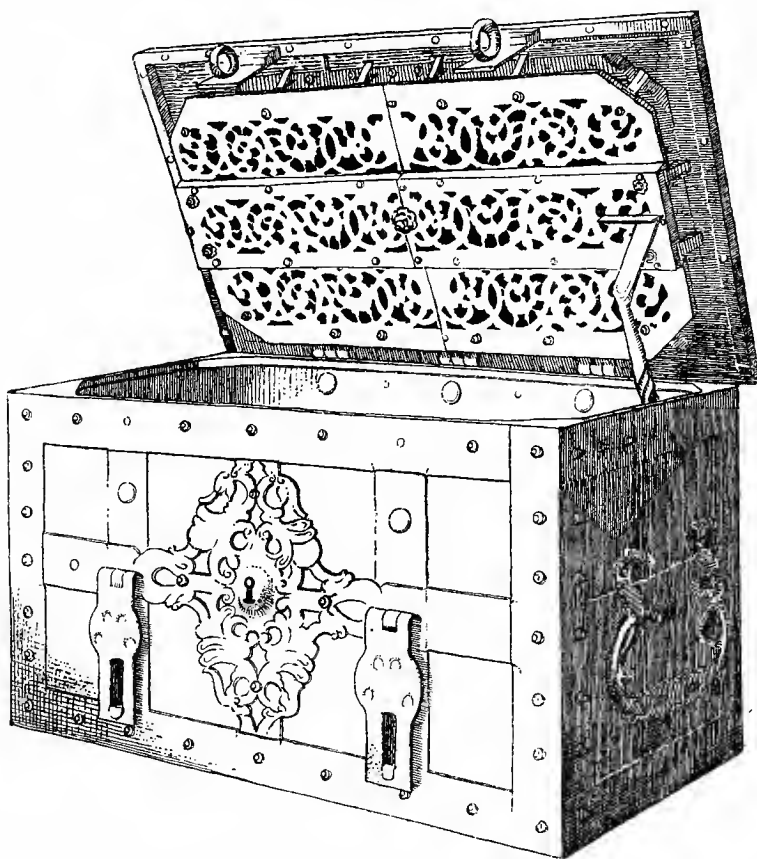
Two gallant spirits stand, however, out from the brave adventurers of the seventeenth century—Humphrey Fitzherbert and Andrew Shillinge, who in 1520 hoisted the flag of King James on the Signal Hill and took possession of the land in the name of England. But England was otherwise occupied and had no use for the far-off, little-known Cape of Good Hope, so Holland caught the land from her careless hand and in 1652 the Dutch East India Company sent



EAST INDIA COMPANY'S HOUSE AT AMSTERDAM

Commander Johan van Riebeeck with a handful of Company's servants to build a fort and plant a garden, in order that a supply of vegetables might be assured to the Company's fleets on their way to and from Batavia. There is no space here wherein to dwell on the brave tale of this little band. The saga of van Riebeeck is to be read in the archives of the Cape of Good Hope, but of his buildings nothing remains except the foundations of his great barn under the house of Groote Schuur, left by Cecil Rhodes for the residence of the Premier of South Africa, and the house of Rustenburg at Rondebosch on the site of the earlier dwelling planned by him at the foot of the Company's plantations.

The early Dutch commanders who came after van Riebeeck administered the affairs of the little settlement with care, if without enthusiasm, bearing in mind the Company's desire to see the Cape established merely as a useful provision station on the way to the East, a place of refreshment where vegetables and fresh water might be obtained by passing ships. But in 1679 came a commander with wider aims for the country—Simon van der Stel. He pushed the



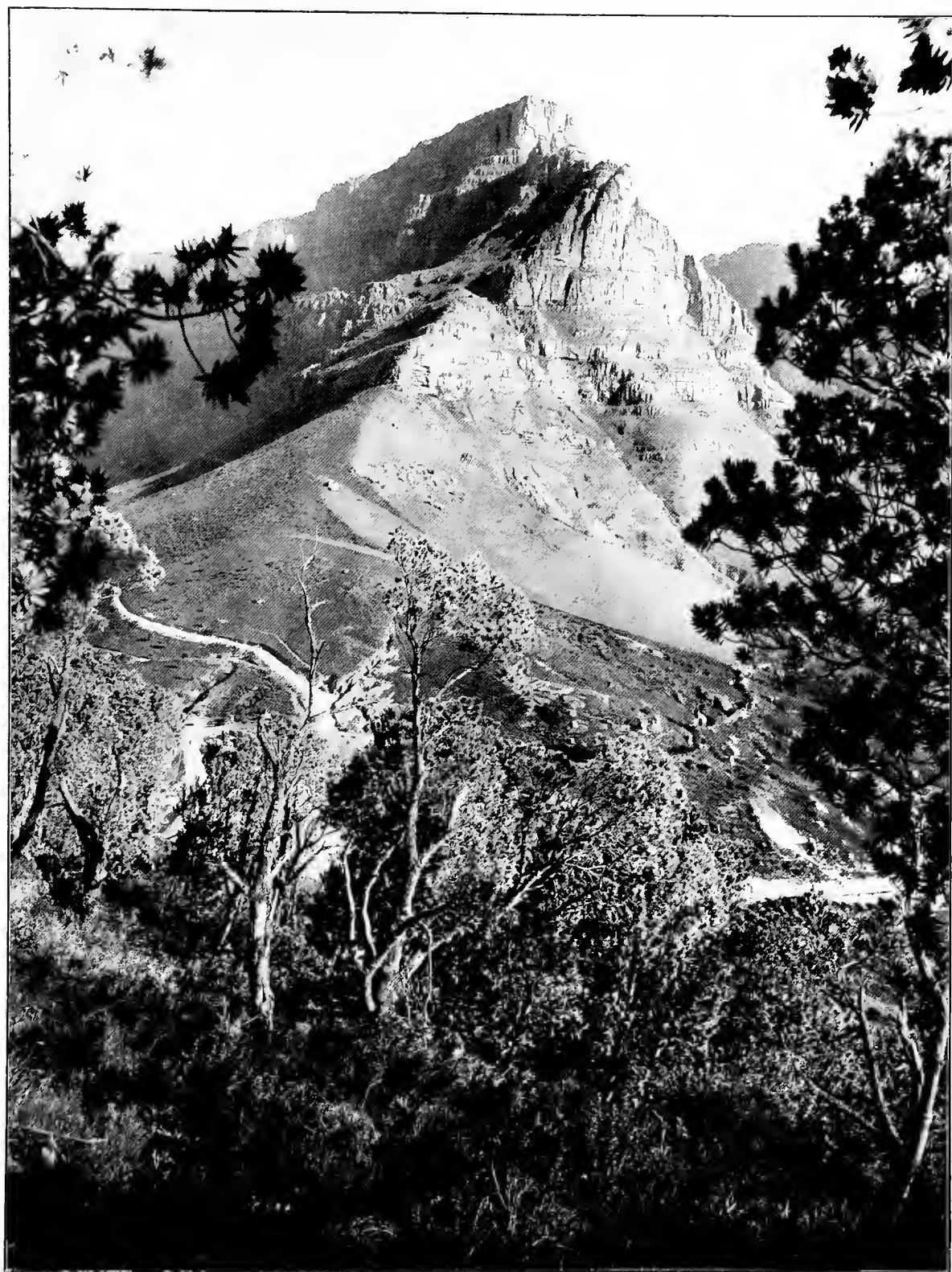
AN OLD MONEY-CHEST OF THE COMPANY

boundaries of the little colony to the northward and founded at the foot of the blue Drakenstein mountains the town of Stellenbosch, thirty miles from Cape Town. The Company bestowed on him the estate of Groot Constantia, and here he built the fine white gabled house that stands to this day and planted vineyards and oak avenues, and here he made good wine, in the hope that those of the colonists who had settled down as wine-farmers might be induced to follow his example.

The homesteads of the early settlers had been of a primitive nature—strong, as a defence against the wild beasts that prowled around the settlement, though probably with scant beauty. As the new land thrived and expanded, and the burghers and wine-farmers acquired wealth and leisure, the foundations were laid of the graceful gabled houses which to-day stand in the shade of giant oaks in and around the Cape Peninsula, set about with wide vineyards and fruitful orchards. To Simon van der Stel and to his son Willem Adriaan, who succeeded him as Governor in 1699, the architecture of the Cape owes much of its inspiration. Both threw themselves with ardour into the work of developing the country on wider lines than had hitherto been attempted, both got into trouble with the Company in consequence and were moreover indignantly reprimanded for their action in detaining skilled workmen on their way to the more important possessions in the East Indies. But we of to-day owe to this mild delinquency much of the loveliness of the old houses, the grace of their plaster work and the fine hinges and hasps of brass or iron.

In 1687 a new influence came into the country. Huguenot refugees, who had fled from France into Holland after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, were sent out to the Cape and established on the banks of Berg River, from *Coin Français*, which is now French Hoek, to some distance north of the Paarl. Here they planted vines and built themselves simple houses, but so rapidly did the sale of their wine to the passing fleets and the garrison render them men of substance that fine homesteads soon showed their white gables and roofs of smooth brown thatch above the green of the prosperous vineyards.

Willem Adriaan van der Stel followed his father's policy of developing the country. He colonized the Land of Waveren, now known as Tulbagh; he imported wool-bearing sheep and laid the foundation of the wool industry of South Africa; but his plans for the future of the land which he loved as dearly as his father had done were cut short by the discontent of a party amongst the farmers, headed by a wealthy butcher-contractor named Huysing and his wife's nephew Adam Tas, who saw in the governor's policy a menace to the methods by which they had acquired considerable wealth, without undue exertion. His actions were misrepresented to the directors of the Dutch East India Company, and in 1706 he was recalled; at the same time an order was sent out enacting that in future no Company's official should own any land. As a result of this short-sighted decree the Cape was henceforth administered by



A CORNER OF TABLE MOUNTAIN



INTERNAL CONSTRUCTION OF A GABLED ROOF



TWO TYPES OF GABLES

men who had no personal stake in the country and cared nothing for its development—only desirous of seeing it fulfil its limited mission as a provision station and watering place. It must be remembered that the Company's interests were centred in the rich East Indies, and the van der Stels paid the penalty of being in advance of their times in desiring to see the Cape of Good Hope developed on wide lines, and it is not until we come to Governor Ryk Tulbagh in 1751 that we touch again the note of love for the land. In 1795 the Cape of Good Hope passed into the possession of England. It was given back to Holland by the Treaty of Amiens in 1802 and taken again by England in 1805. Through the years that preceded and followed these changes the well-to-do burghers continued to build houses on the good early models, and only with the latter half of the nineteenth century did the wave of ugliness and meretricious taste which had swept over Europe a few decades earlier sweep away much that was lovely. With the dawn of the era of red-brick villas, adorned with pepper-pot cupolas and smugly hideous, some of the beautiful houses were destroyed or shorn of their charm, on the ground that they were old-fashioned. Much that is lovely remains, however, and a new school of architects has arisen, inspired in the first instance by the genius of Cecil Rhodes, who bought and saved from destruction many of the fine old homesteads, and their work testifies to the possibility of applying successfully the principles of old Cape architecture to modern buildings.

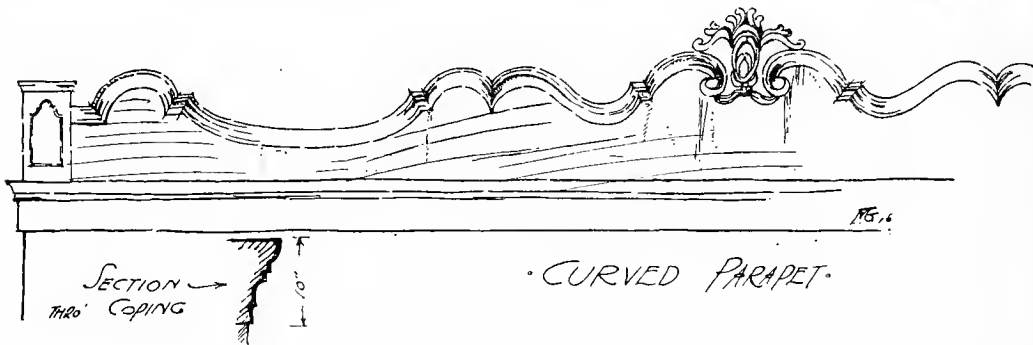
The houses are set in a fair land. A land of wide spaces, of blue mountains which are purple in the dawn and rose-red when the swift Southern evening is falling; a land of promise and of rich fulfilment; a land of clear skies, of flower-strewn stretches, of forests and open veld, green vineyards and rich orchards—of grim grey rocks too, of wild winds and of the wide Karoo with its gnarled, uncouth vegetation, its sun-washed sands and its emptiness.

She is very old this South Africa—old and eternally young, with the light of the dawn in her eyes and in her heart the memories of the past.

I

SOUTH AFRICAN ARCHITECTURE

IN Saenredam's picture of the Town Hall of Haarlem, in the Michaelis Gallery at Cape Town, there is little that is familiar to students of Cape Dutch architecture. There are gables, it is true, but gables of a type unknown to old Cape Town or Stellenbosch. The Town Hall itself bears little resemblance to the old Burgher



Watch House of Ryk Tulbagh's day, now the resting-place of this picture and its companions, the collection of seventeenth-century Dutch paintings which are the gift of Mr. Max Michaelis to South Africa. The Haarlem Town Hall was begun in the twelfth century and was formerly a palace of the counts of Holland ; it was remodelled in 1602 by Lieven de Key, who built the curious Flishers' Hall in 1603.

But, for all the lack of resemblance, it is well worth our while to study this picture and to realize what went to the formation of Dutch architecture, if we are to understand the spirit in which seventeenth-century Holland founded the Mother City of South Africa.

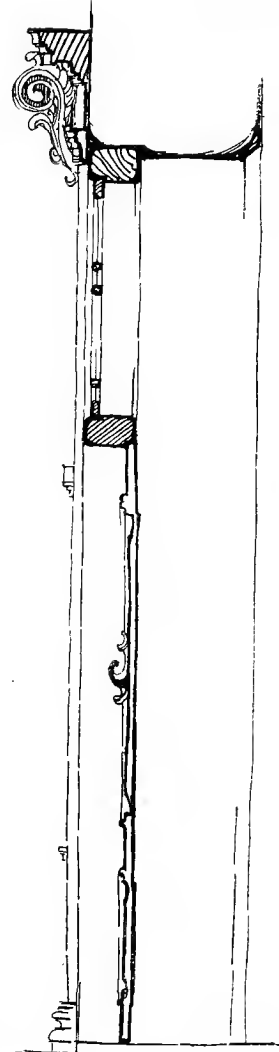
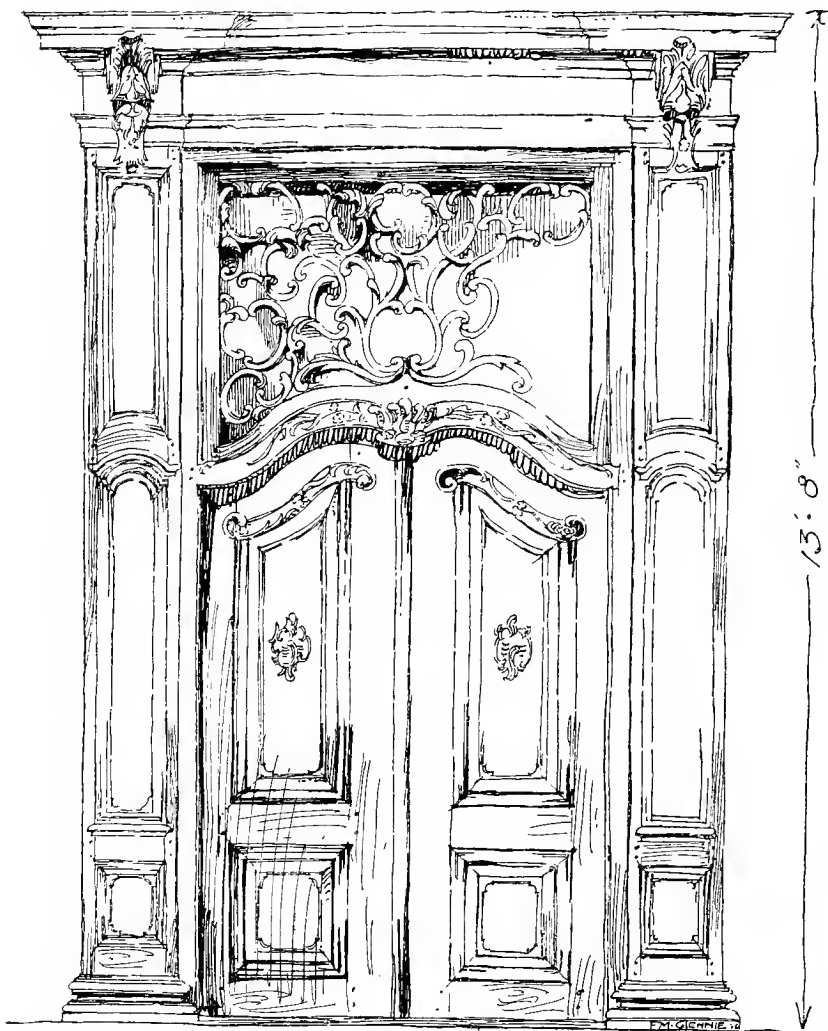
Until the middle of the fifteenth century public and domestic buildings in Holland were built in the Gothic style. With the close of the Eighty Years' War, when under the inspiration of William the Silent the yoke of Spain was thrown off, the breath of a new life swept through the country. From suffering and oppression the Dutch emerged strong and valiant, a nation which sent its ships to

the ends of the earth to gather in riches and built itself Town Halls and Weigh Houses and Store Houses as the visible expression of the new spirit of liberty and prosperity that had come into the land. Into this new Holland came too the echo of the Renaissance, and though the Dutch—being a conservative people—still continued to build on Gothic lines as far as the bulk of the building was concerned, a Transitional style came into use. This has been described as ‘the use of classic motifs and decoration, as interpreted by Dutch architects, in conjunction with the Gothic type of house.’ It would almost seem, however, as though circumstances, even more than conservatism, tended to produce this type. When you have the very narrow street-frontage which the domestic buildings of Holland were allowed in towns it is difficult to build on classical lines. It was therefore perfectly natural that the seventeenth-century builders should continue to present high gabled ends to the street, and perhaps equally natural that they should so far yield to the spirit of the times as to decorate these ends with carved stone lion-heads and swags of fruit and to build window-heads and doorways with classical outlines. The gables of the earlier and more purely Gothic houses had been almost invariably of the primitive order, crow-stepped and sometimes grotesque. There are later examples which show the classical influence in being crowned by pediments, and others again which combine the two influences.

Eventually pediments, hipped roofs, and cornices became features of Dutch domestic architecture. There are, however, few examples of houses built in the pure spirit of the Renaissance, for the reasons that I have indicated. At Amsterdam and in other towns houses were built early in the seventeenth century which are fine instances of a style in which the classical spirit is blended with that of the earlier influences with entire success. Fifty years after the building of these houses the city of Cape Town was founded. A fort, on the present Parade Ground, was the first building raised by the white man in South Africa, and we can well believe that van Riebeeck was more intent upon making it secure from the marauding little Hottentots and the lions that roared under its walls at night than upon any niceties of gable or pediment. Between this primitive fort and the house built by Simon van der Stel at Constantia some thirty years or so later lies a world of brave endurance and hardship overcome—Groot Constantia is a landmark, and from it we may reckon the starting-point of South African architecture. There are some people who doubt whether the house that is so familiar to us is the actual house built by van der Stel. I have never come across any evidence to the contrary nor any

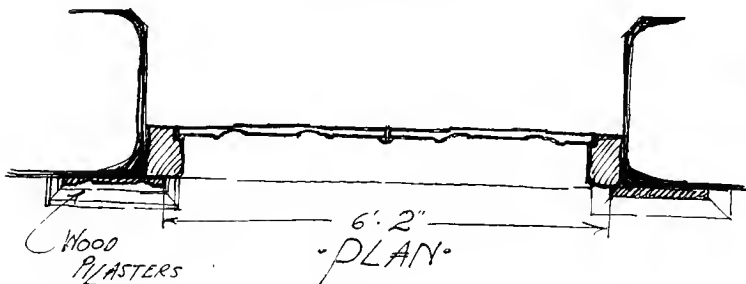
DORWAY • NORMAL COLLEGE • • CAPE TOWN.

FANLIGHT & DOOR
IN TEAK.



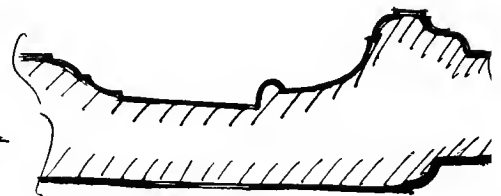
ELEVATION.

SECTION.



6' 2"
PLAN.

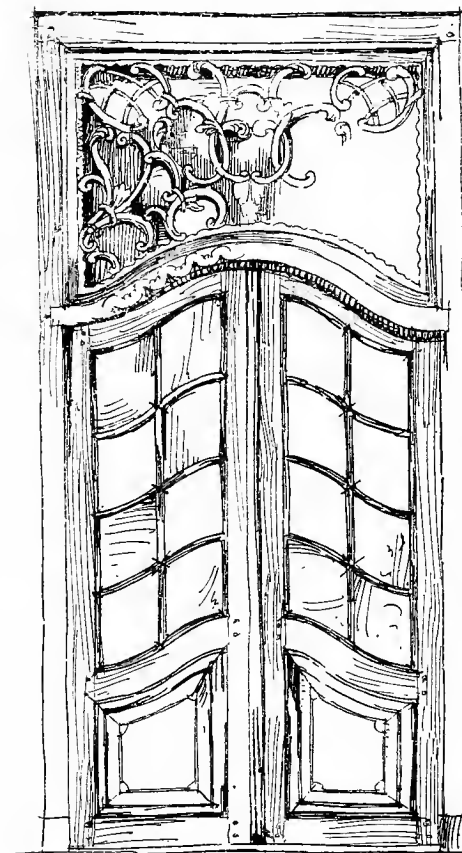
WOOD
PLASTERS



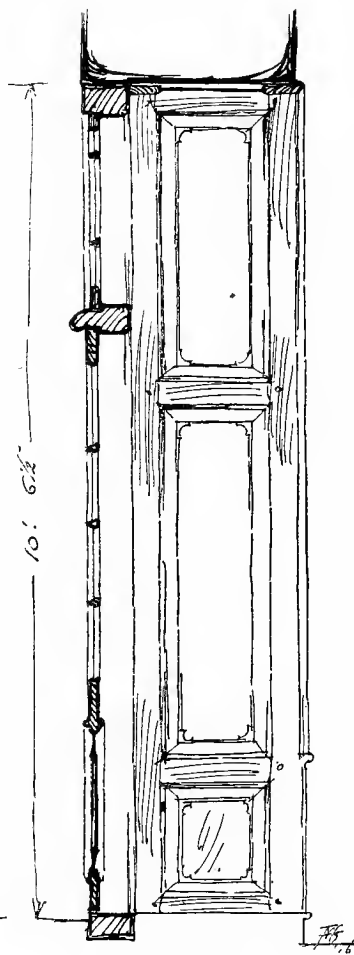
DETAIL THROUGH
DOOR PANEL.

13/6

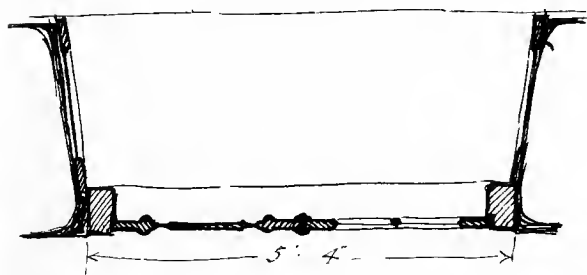
DOORWAY IN THE CASTLE (IN TEAK)
- CAPE TOWN.



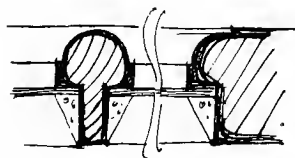
• ELEVATION •



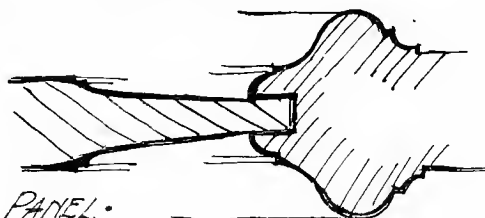
• SECTION •



P/AN.



DETAIL UPPER DOOR PANEL.



• DETAIL LOWER PANEL •

reason to think that it has been rebuilt; on the other hand, evidence points to its being the actual house. We know from passing travellers and from the records of the time that Simon van der Stel built a large homestead on the land granted to him by the Dutch East India Company. We have a glowing description of the beauty of this 'lovely seat' from the pen of Kolbe—so inaccurate a writer, however, that I should hesitate to quote him were it not that his admiration is shared by others. Why should not the beautiful house seen by Kolbe in 1713 be the beautiful house of to-day? Then again, who but a van der Stel would have decorated his floor with the star in red stone which we find at Constantia? A star was borne on the arms of the van der Stel and of the Six families¹ and it is recorded that Simon van der Stel worked a quarry of this red stone in the Steinbergen and that it was used for floors and steps. But to my mind the most conclusive evidence is to be found in the type of the gables.

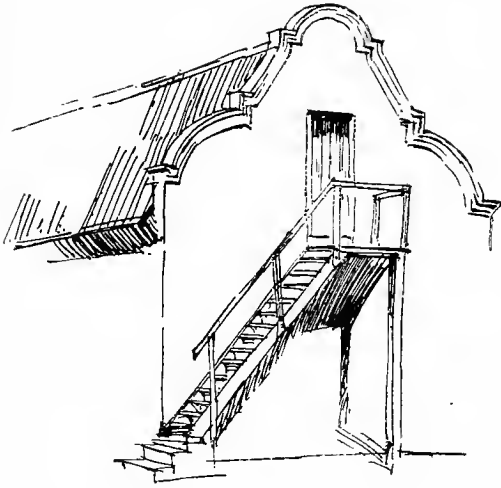
We have seen that the earlier gables in Holland were of the corbie or crow-step type. These were followed by gables with pediment tops, in accordance with the spirit of classicism, and finally by elaborate variations of this and the original simple forms. Of these later and more elaborate gables you will find examples which have retained the pointed top of the crow-step gable, while others curve and riot under the severity of a classic pediment.

The gables with which the early Dutch builders at the Cape adorned their houses also fall into these two classes, the pointed and the pediment-topped, and the Constantia gables in their fine severity are the best examples we have of the latter type. Somewhat similar is the front of the gable of Stellenberg, and when we remember that Jacobus Vogel, who owned Stellenberg, was a warm friend of the van der Stels and one of those who came forward to give his testimony in favour of Willem Adriaan, we may with some reason suppose that the smaller house drew its inspiration from the greater. It clearly owes the family its name. Stellenberg was destroyed by fire in 1710 but rebuilt immediately afterwards.

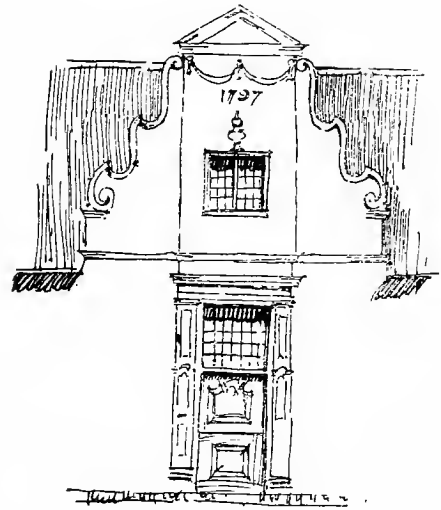
Therefore, to go back to the gables of Groot Constantia, it is just that feeling of classical severity about them that makes me think that they were built for Simon van der Stel, gables which are on houses of a later date are, for the greater part, more florid; they are often exceedingly graceful, but grace sometimes deteriorates into mere flourishes and curves, as at Uiterwyk. Those of Groot Constantia and Stellenberg might well be the work of one builder, and probably were

¹ The arms of the family of van der Stel were Or, three castles gules, but Simon van der Stel impaled with his own arms the star of the Sixes, his wife's family.

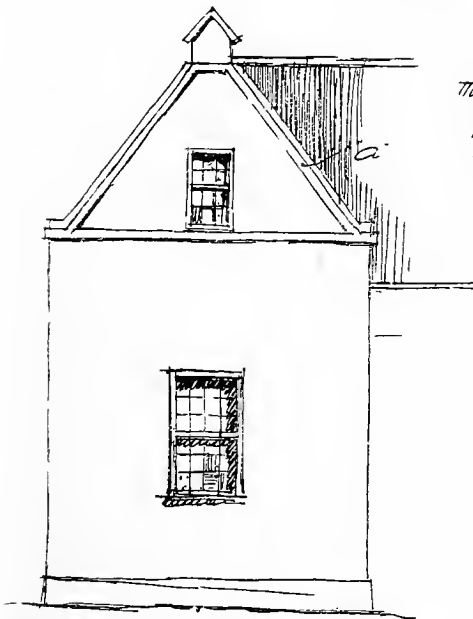
TYPICAL GABLES



GABLE AT
NEWLANDS.

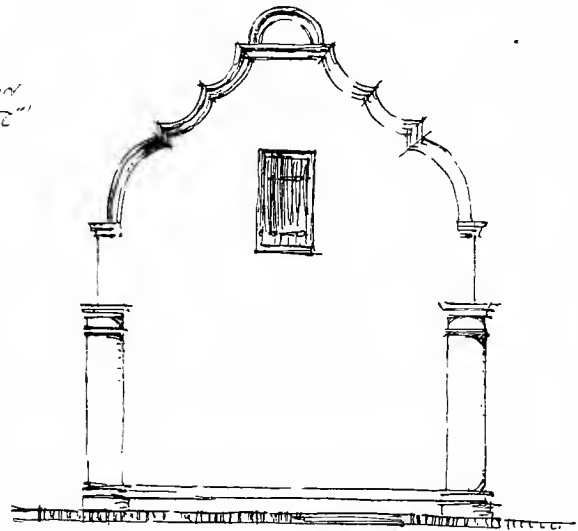


AT • STELLENBOSCH •



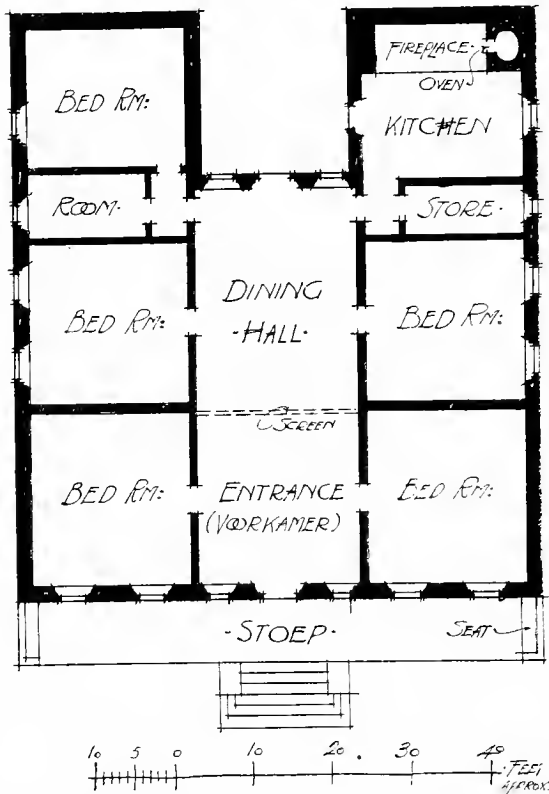
AT • FISH HOEK •

Section
AT "C"



AT • GROOT DRAKENSTEIN •

almost contemporary. The student of Cape architecture is frequently met by the fact that the decorative gables over the front and back doors of the houses are not of the same period as the building. There is evidence to show that these have sometimes been reconstructed (the date on them is usually that of the re-building), which may account for the elaborate rococo gables which are sometimes to be seen when the four end gables of the house are of charming simplicity. This grace and simplicity of outline has sometimes been ascribed to the influence of the Huguenots.



GROUND PLAN OF A TOWN HOUSE

with six gables, the second being square and flat-roofed and surmounted by an architrave which was often finely decorated in plaster-work.

In the country districts the majority of the houses belong to the first type, and the ground-plan has been described as that of the letter **H** seen from the side. A simple gable, plain or slightly curved and but rarely crow-step, finishes each of the four ends of the **H**, and a gable

The early Dutch Governors were familiar with the mingled Gothic and Renaissance ideals of Holland. They were, moreover, well acquainted with the houses of the East Indies, built for shade and coolness, and Cape architecture is of peculiar interest in showing how these widely-differing traditions were affected by climatic conditions, by the limited materials available in a new country and by slave-labour. The steeply-pitched Gothic roof of mediaeval northern Europe had been calculated to resist heavy falls of snow and inclement weather—the vine-covered stoep of the Cape homestead was to guard the colonists from the fierce heat of the Southern summer.

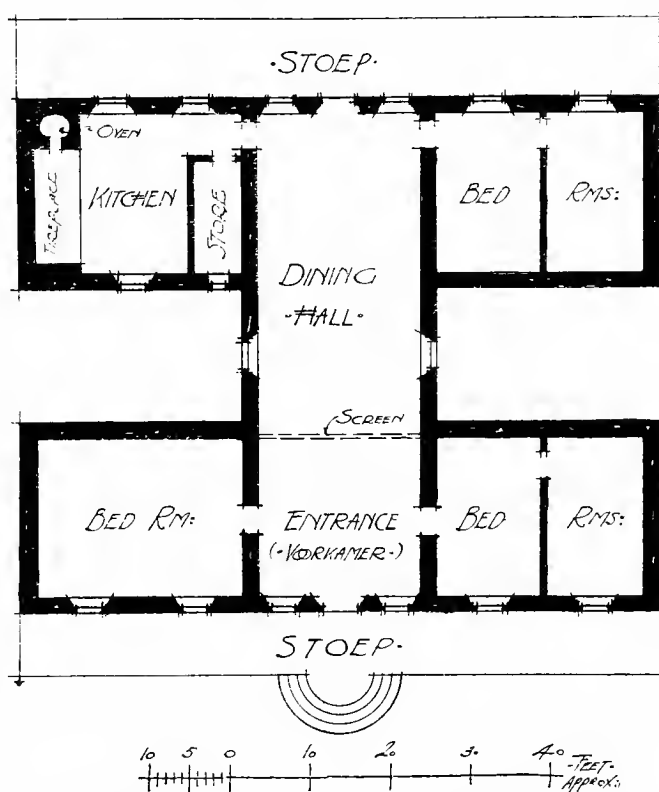
The old houses of the Cape fall into two classes, the first having steeply pitched roofs covered with thatch and usually

of a more elaborate type, and often showing French influence, appears over the front and back doors, the back and front of the house usually being alike. Sometimes the smaller houses are **T**-shaped, but this is only an incomplete building of the **H** type, usually found where the property has been subdivided in accordance with the Roman-Dutch law of inheritance. In the neighbourhood of Cape Town the gabled houses are more frequently formed like a square **U**, with a little garden or paved courtyard between the two arms.

We cannot trace the ground-plan of the **H**-house either to Holland or the East, though there are Dutch barns with gabled ends which may have suggested the idea. Two parallel barns, connected in the middle by a long room, give the **H** ground-plan, and it is possible that the scarcity of long roof-planks led to this method of building a large house without any great width of roof-span. The barns with gable-ends were united in one harmonious whole, the smooth brown thatch for the roofs was gathered from the veld, the yellow-wood forests were cut down to yield rafted

ceilings and polished floors, teak was brought from the Far East for the shutters and window-frames, the deft-fingered Oriental slaves worked marvels in plaster decoration. Many of the gables, as we have seen earlier, suggest French influence, brought in by the Huguenots, while the stoeps and the white pillars which supported the grape-vines above them were inspired by memories of Batavia.

In the **H**-houses all the living-rooms are on the ground floor,



GROUND PLAN OF COUNTRY HOUSE

and there are large attics which are usually store-rooms, though some present-day owners are converting them into bedrooms. The floor of these attics is called the brandsolder ; it is formed of a thick layer of clay under the wooden planks, and is intended to protect the lower floor in case of fire.

In spite of this precaution the charming thatched and gabled houses of the early burghers proved an easy prey to the fires which frequently ravaged the mountain-sides and sent showers of sparks over the settlement. Therefore, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, we find the Council of Policy—the governing body—recommending the building of flat-roofed houses in the place of those which had been destroyed by fire, and from this period date many of the dignified square buildings of a simple Renaissance type which may still be seen in the streets of Stellenbosch and—though more rarely—of Cape Town, where they have not been pulled down to make room for shops and offices.

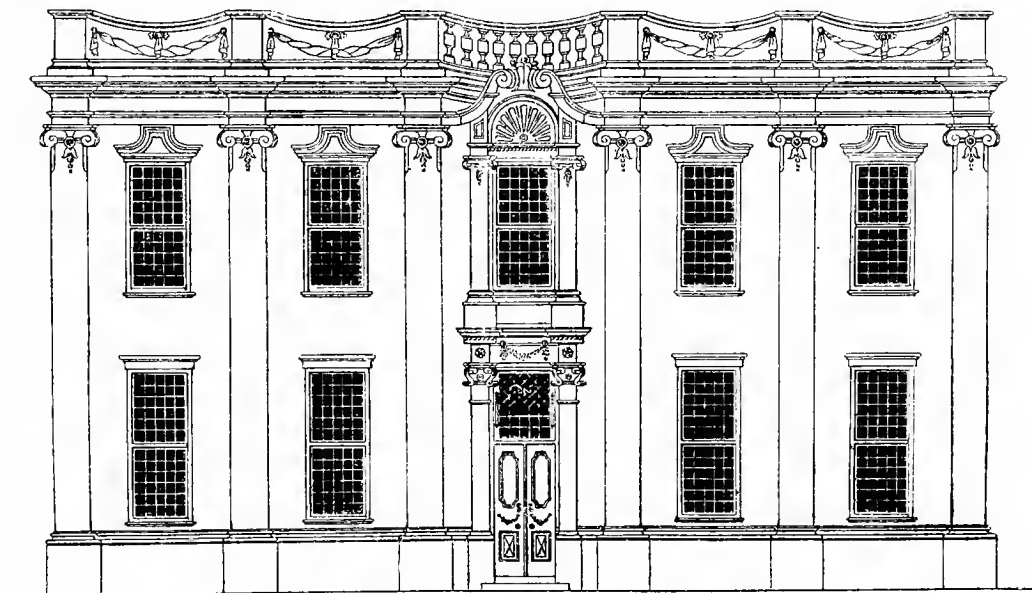
These square houses belonged to the towns rather than to the country districts, where gabled, thatched buildings continued in general use until, in the train of nineteenth-century progress, came fire insurances with high tariff for thatch, followed by the fruit and grain farmers who put under the plough the wide flats where thatching reeds had grown since the beginning of time. Unhappily, corrugated iron presented a cheap substitute, which was eagerly adopted by a generation which had forgotten the sense of beauty that had inspired its forefathers—and not only were many of the thatched roofs destroyed but some of the most graceful gables were shorn off, in order that the corrugated iron might the more easily be adjusted.

Structurally the two types of Cape houses are unlike, but the details are common to both. In this the early builders followed the example of seventeenth-century Holland, where the windows were often square-headed and architraves over doors are as often found on high-pitched, gabled houses, as on those of classical design.

A characteristic feature of all Cape houses is the stoep, a platform of brick or stone in front of the building and sometimes extending round it with curved brick and plaster seats of graceful proportions at the corners. The stoep is sometimes shaded from the summer heat by a grape-vine trailed over columns, but more frequently its only protection is afforded by the great oaks which are almost always found round the old homesteads. It is a very pleasant feature of a Cape house but it must be owned that unsheltered it leaves something to be desired on wet days. In modern houses it is usually covered by a verandah, but the old roof of vine-leaves was more lovely. The wine cellars

and slave quarters which are always found near the country homesteads are frequently very charming.

Many of the old houses have screens which divide the entrance-hall or voor-huis from the large dining-room—the crossbar of the **H**. This screen is of wood, sometimes finely inlaid with ebony, sometimes louvred to admit air and sometimes pierced and patterned for glass in a manner suggestive of a fine Chippendale cabinet. The screens can be unlatched and pushed back, so that one long apartment is formed



HOUSE OF THE KOSTER (SEXTON) WHICH STOOD
IN THE HEERENGRACHT

From a drawing by H. Schutte

which in the old days was used for church or dancing, according to circumstances.

The gables present every variety of curve and angle—from the simple and lovely lines which satisfy the eye to debased rococo curligues. Some gables may be traced direct to Holland; those of Groot Constantia, for instance, bear a strong resemblance to the gables on the old Weigh House in Monnikendam and to several gables in Amsterdam, while others are clearly French in their inspiration. The gables on the **H**-houses lent themselves to fine plaster-work, and so, in a greater degree, did the architraves of the square buildings of a classical type and the urns and figures that decorated them. Of these architraves the finest example left to us is the frieze over the

wine-cellar at Groot Constantia. It is the work of the master-sculptor Anton Anreith, who came to the Cape in 1777 and spent his life there. Who he was, or why he left the Europe in which great fame would surely have been his, we do not know with any certainty, though many stories are told of him. A great artist, working for the most part in a perishable medium, fire and modern progress have destroyed some of his work, but enough is left to bear witness to his genius. The massively carved pulpits in the Dutch Reformed and Lutheran Churches reveal to us his mastery over wood, but fine as they are in their heavy way they do not breathe of his rare sense of beauty as do the Ganymede and Loves over the wine-cellar of Groot Constantia. Perhaps the Fathers of the Church considered that heaviness and reverence went hand in hand, while the unfettered genius of Anreith was given full play in the pagan design of the Constantia frieze.

The walls that fenced in the old homesteads often took on gracious curves, breaking into them almost at haphazard, it would seem, but with a fine sense of line and proportion. The gateways, too, were very fine, with graceful mouldings in plaster-work. Up to recent years the Malays of Cape Town—the descendants of the seventeenth-century slaves and political exiles from the East—held the masonry craft in their hands and worked with the sense of curve and line handed down to them by their forefathers. To-day the capable white workman has taken the place of the Abdols and Magmoets of a vanishing past, and an indefinable something has gone out of the world, as many of the gateways and gables of modern South Africa testify.

Chimneys at the Cape are for the most part simple. In many of the old houses there are no fireplaces, only a wide open hearth in the kitchen. The women of the Cape are good cooks, many of their recipes having come down from Dutch or French or East Indian sources, and they achieve wonders by means of three-legged cooking pots on these open hearths or in home-made ovens of brick or clay out of doors. The old Dutch burghers and their wives seldom used fires for warmth—if they were cold they put on an extra shawl or petticoat or sat with their feet on a perforated wooden box in which was a little brass charcoal-brazier. Slaves accompanied their mistresses to church carrying these little stoofjes to place under their feet. It is no matter for surprise that chimneys were little accounted of, though fine twisted ones are to be seen on a few of the old houses.

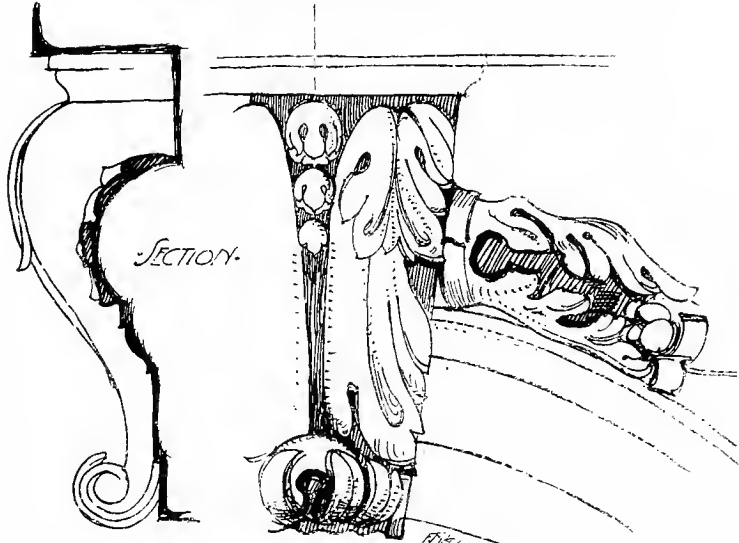
The windows of the early houses were probably casements, but they were very quickly followed by sash-windows—the latter being found on Simon van der Stel's Groot Constantia, built towards the end of the seventeenth century. It will be remembered that even in

the Gothic period in Holland windows were usually square-headed. Sometimes they were surmounted by decorated arched spaces, and with the Renaissance these were followed by classic pediments such as may be seen over some old windows in Cape Town. Heavy shutters are almost always found; they are usually of teak and are occasionally louvred, but more often solid—sometimes pierced with a heart to admit air. The ironwork on these shutters is massive and good, much of it being attributed to the workmen detained at the Cape on their way to Batavia by the van der Stels. Sash-windows with rounded tops are sometimes found.

The doors throughout the old Cape homesteads were always of a generous amplitude and solidity, frequently panelled or inlaid with a contrasting wood—a very usual combination being teak and yellow-wood, or yellow-wood and stinkwood, occasionally with ebony mouldings. The outer doors vary in type. Sometimes, as in the case of the door removed from Elsenburg to Groote Schuur, they were enriched by side-panels of ironwork, or plaster mouldings or carved wood. One type of door is divided horizontally, so that the lower half may remain closed while the upper half is opened—these doors are still found in Holland. In another type the upper half is a sash window, with the innumerable small panes which characterize all the old windows, which may be pushed up or pulled down. In buildings where the decoration is of the classical type the doors are flanked by pilasters and surmounted by architraves. Fanlights were a fine feature over the doors, and vary in design from skilful and elaborate carvings to simple but graceful curves. In many of the larger homesteads cupboards were set in the wall. These are usually of teak or stinkwood, and are often finely carved, sometimes with bombé curves and claw-and-ball feet.

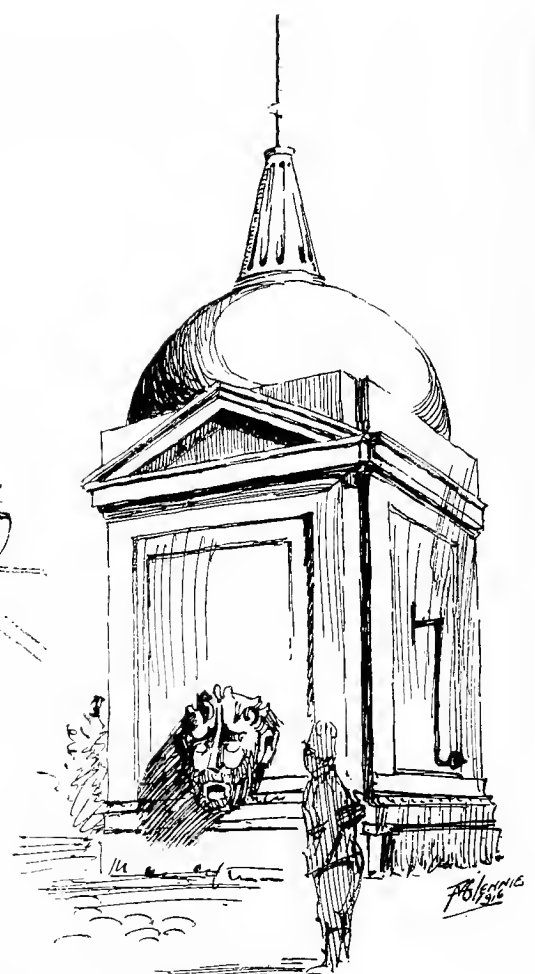
The first South African architect of whom, so far, any indication has been found, is J. Meerman, whose name appears below the plan for a church at the Paarl, sent in by Minister van Aken in 1714. In the latter half of the eighteenth century came the greatest Cape architect of the past—Louis Michiel Thibault of Picquigny near Amiens, a young Lieutenant of Engineers, who came to the country in the service of the Dutch East India Company. He was employed by the Council of Policy on many public buildings, the decoration being often executed by Anton Anreith. The Oude Drostdy at Tulbagh is the work of Louis Thibault, and the building used until recent times as the Supreme Court was built by him in the courtyard of Simon van der Stel's Slave Lodge. The little oval room at the entrance to the old Supreme Court has singular beauty of proportion.

PLASTER DECORATION.



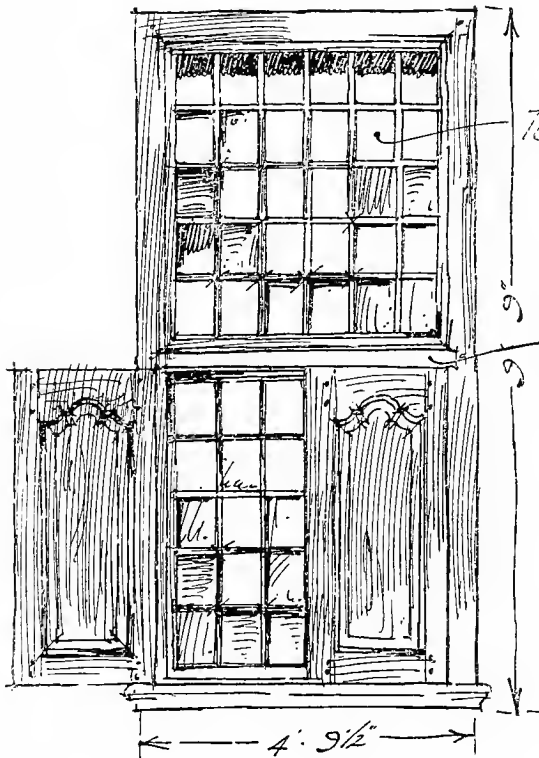
SECTION.

KEY BLOCK &
- ARCHIVOLT.



DUTCH PUMP.

IN PLASTER WITH
- CARVED TEAK CARCOYLE.



TOP SASH
- FIXED.

TRANSOME
REBATED FOR
- SHUTTER.

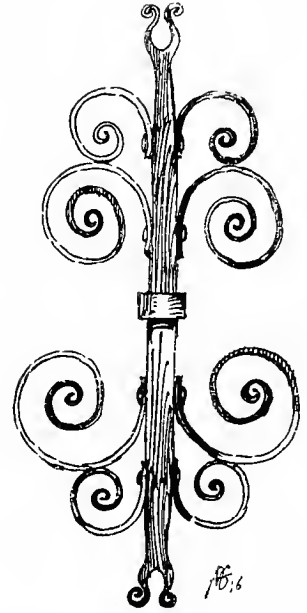
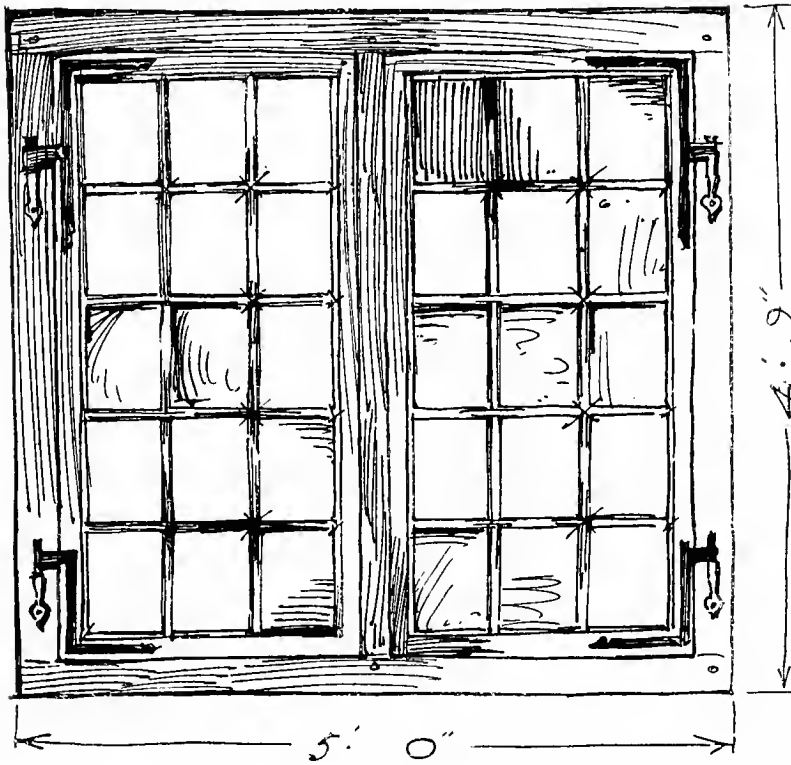
SASH WINDOW (TEAK)

PG. 10.

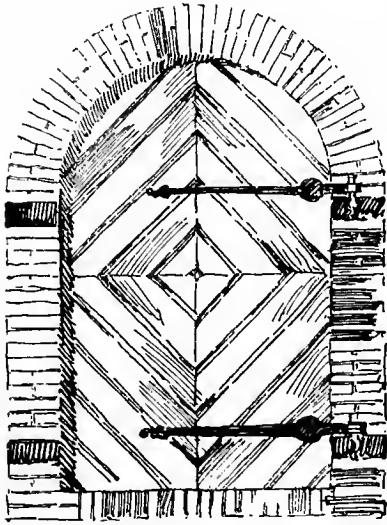


GABLE & OLD LUTHERAN PARSONAGE
CAPE TOWN.

CASEMENT WINDOW. (TEAK.)

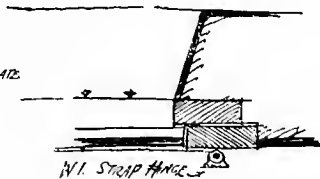


WROUGHT IRON
"ANCHOR"

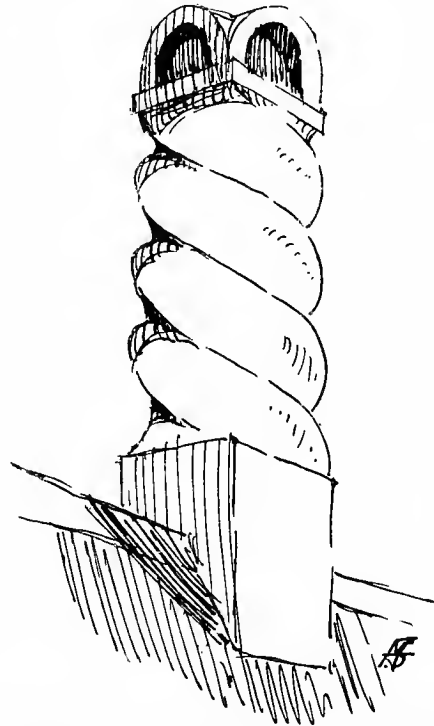


OUT-HOUSE SHUTTER.

PLAN.
SHOWING BRICK REPAIRS



W.I. STRAP HANGE



• TWISTED CHIMNEY • (IN PLASTER)

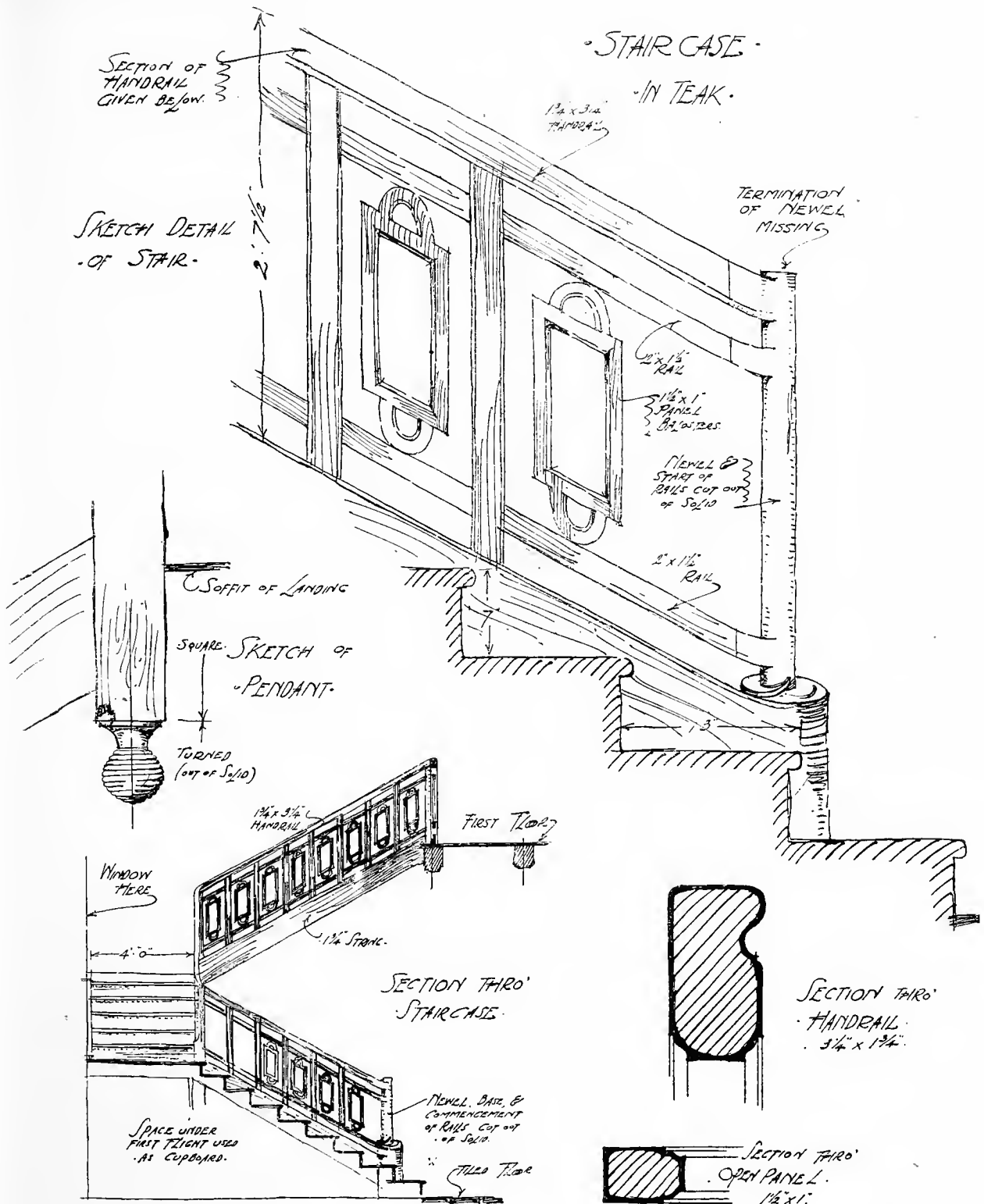
Thibault's work was largely influenced by the classical movement, but it is a mistake to attribute to him all the houses and gables at the Cape which show the influence of the Renaissance. This influence, as we have seen, was probably introduced a century earlier. It was common in Holland in the time of van Riebeeck and the van der Stels, an example being Rembrandt's house in Amsterdam which was probably very familiar to Simon van der Stel, owing to the friendship which existed between his wife's family and the great painter. Mevrouw van der Stel was Johanna Jacoba Six, a member of the family of wealthy burgesses whose name has come down to posterity as the friends of Rembrandt. The façade of the Koopmans de Wet house in Strand Street is sometimes attributed to Thibault, but it may with equal possibility date from earlier in the eighteenth century, the house of the Burgher Reynier Smedinga having stood on this spot since 1701. The Cape possessed fine architects before Thibault, though we do not know the name of the man who designed Groot Constantia or Leeuwenhof or Ryk Tulbagh's dignified Renaissance Burgher Watch House in Greenmarket Square.

The slaves who had attained freedom, by purchase or in other ways, settled on the outskirts of the town, and in the district lying at the foot of the Signal Hill there still exist picturesque, single-storied little houses with flat roofs and graceful curved parapets, where the Malay people of to-day sit on their high stoeps and the cry of the muezzin rings in the ears of the Faithful from the neighbouring mosque. They are fast being elbowed out of existence by modern progress, these little houses, but they are still to be found here and there—survivals of the days that have passed away.

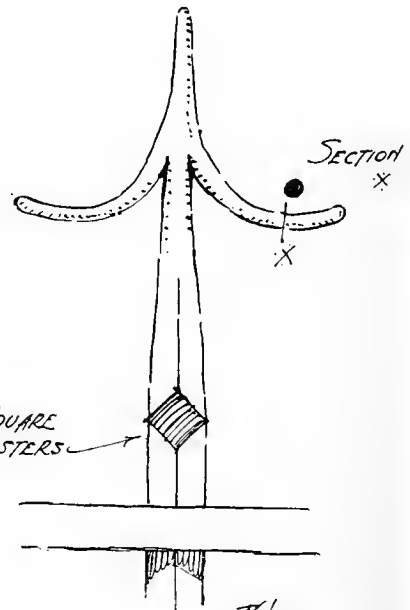
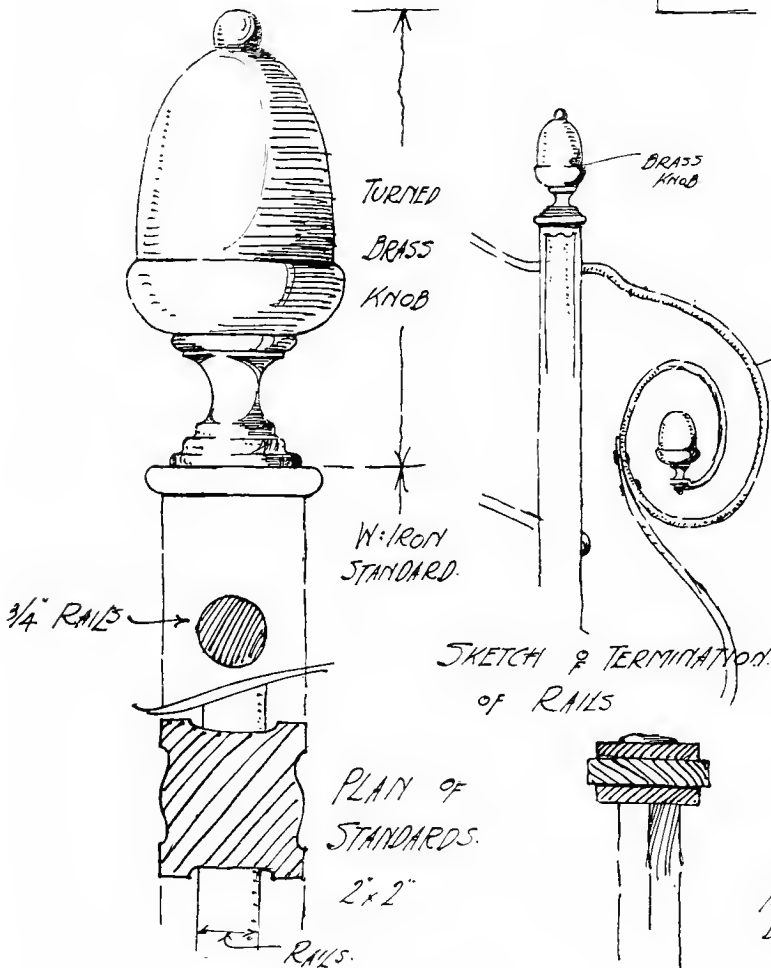
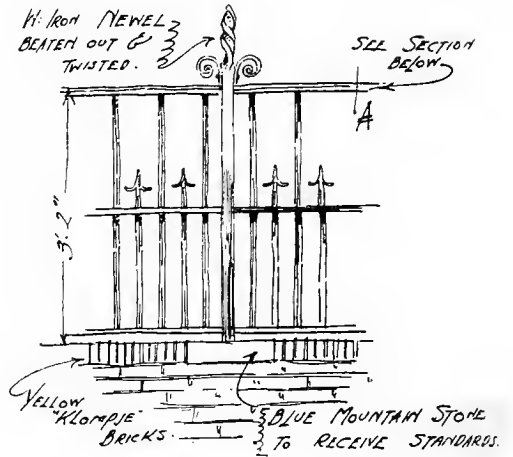
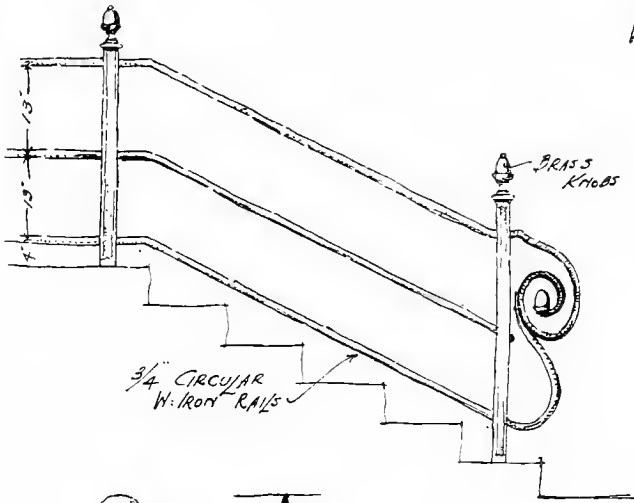
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And so, under one influence and another, the South African type of architecture was evolved, and when the old builders looked on their work it must have been with the knowledge that it was good. With the rebuilding of Groote Schuur and the purchase of many old houses that were threatened with destruction, Cecil Rhodes, for whom Mr. Herbert Baker's early work was done, did much to check the wave of popular taste for ugly red-brick villas. Modern South African architecture draws its inspiration from the fine houses of the past.

A comparison between the old houses in Holland and those in South Africa is of great interest, for it establishes the fact that the actual ground-plan of the Cape house is unique and has no prototype in Europe. Another point to be noticed is that whereas in Holland the builder carried out his fine designs in stone or hard brick, the



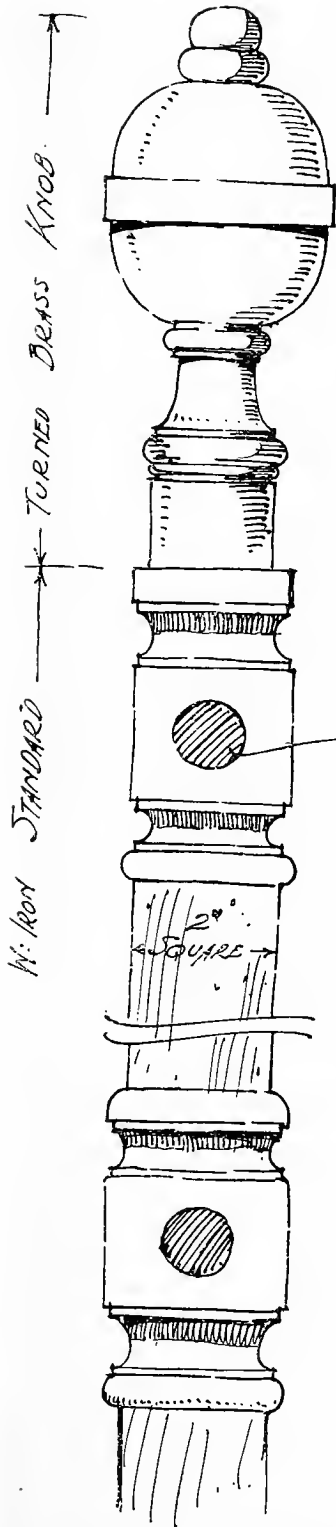
WROUGHT IRON • RAILINGS •



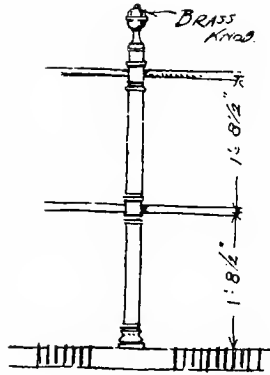
SECTION OF
TOP RAIL & "A"

HOEHNLE & DILL
1914

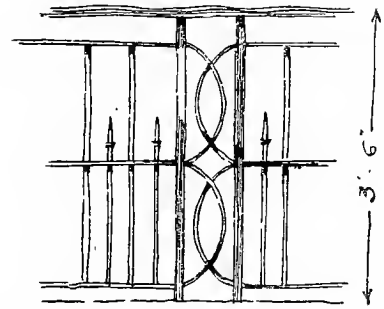
WROUGHT IRON RAILINGS.



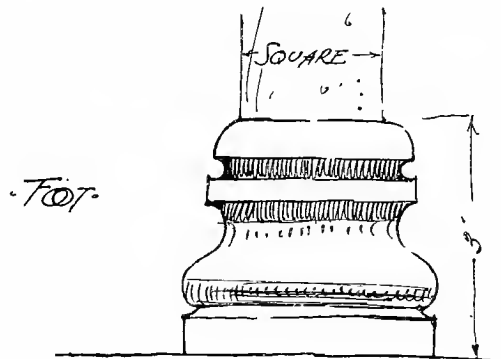
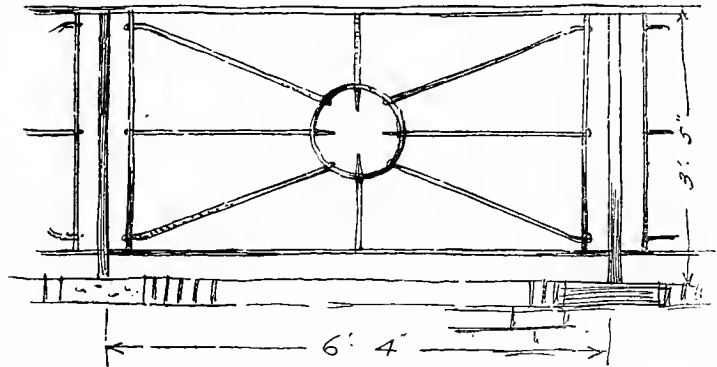
DETAIL of STANDARD.



WROUGHT IRON
STANDARD.



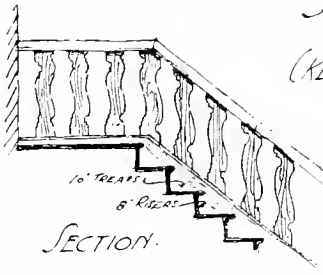
TYPICAL
EXAMPLES.



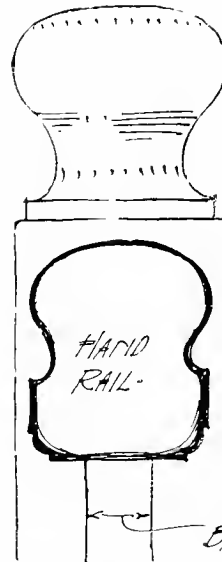
FINISHED
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A TYPICAL CAPE STAIRCASE.

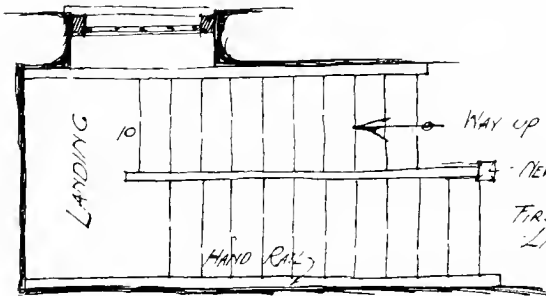
(KEEROM ST.)



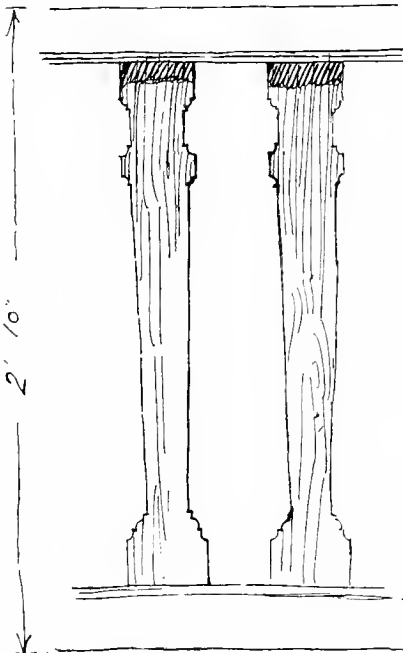
IN TEAK
THROUGHOUT.



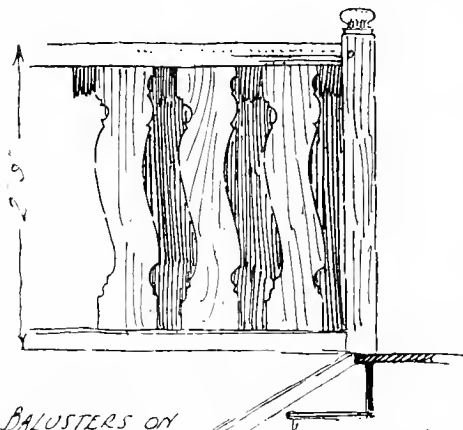
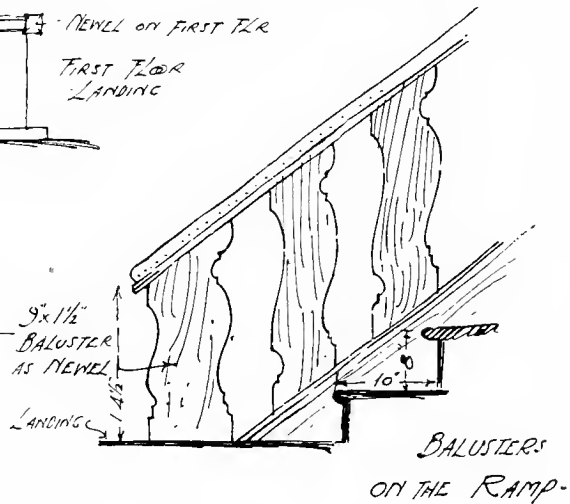
SQUARE CAP
TO NEWEL.



PLAN OF STAIRCASE.



BALUSTERS FROM THE
- KOPMANS DE VIET HOUSE



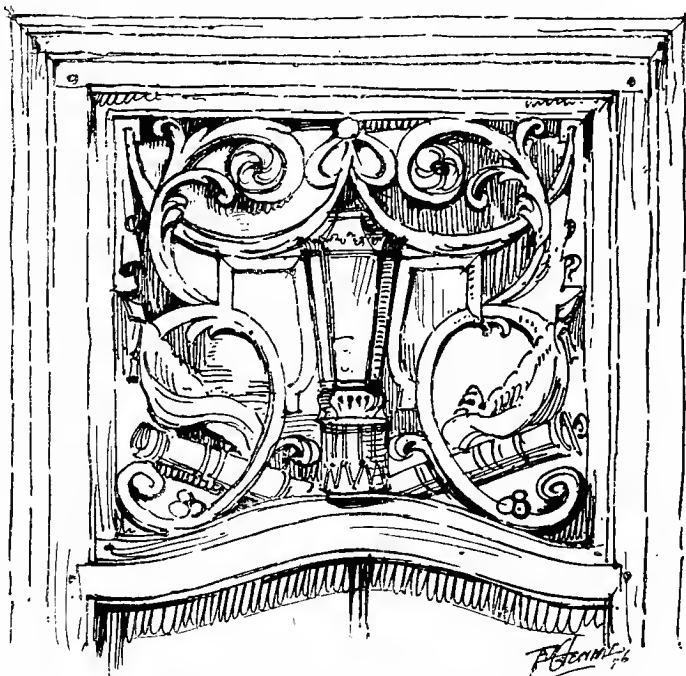
BALUSTERS ON
1ST FLR LANDING.

F. H. G. Smith
New York
1916

bricks of the old Cape workmen were sun-dried affairs, and some of the walls consist of these bricks rammed hard and plastered over, after the manner of *pisé de terre*. Burchell, who arrived at the Cape in 1810, draws attention to this—‘the walls of the Drostdy are of clay, exactly after the manner called building in *Pisée*, to which the dry climate here is particularly favourable. I have seen houses of this kind which have stood a century and which were so burnt by the sun that they looked like tile.’

Writing of the houses in the town he says :

‘The houses are built of brick and faced with a stucco of lime ; they are decorated in front with cornices and many architectural ornaments, and frequently with figures both in high and low relief . . . The windows are very large but the panes of glass are small. Beams and floors of the teak-wood of India are not uncommon ; but the greatest part of the timber used in building, and indeed for every other purpose, is the *Geel-hout* (yellow-wood) and the *Stink-hout* (stink-wood). The latter is a handsome wood and resembles mahogany, both in colour and quality.’

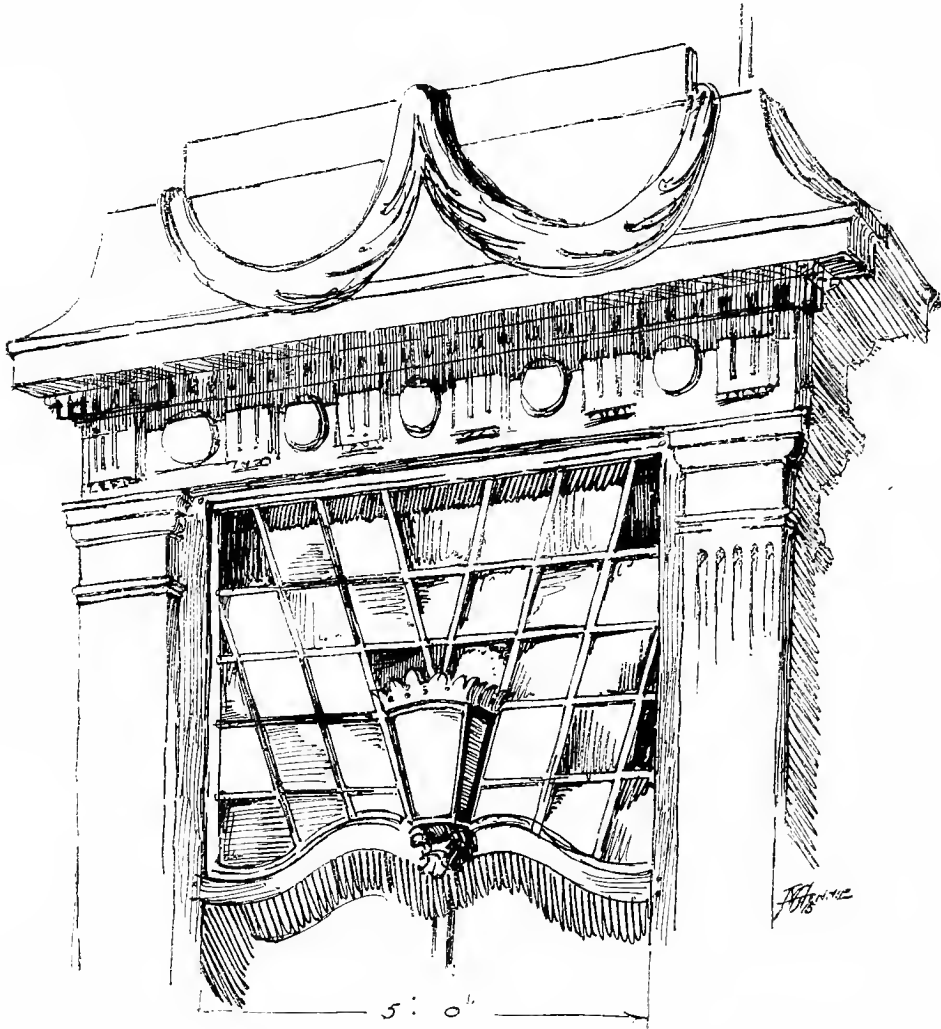


FANLIGHT IN TEAK

From the Imhoff Battery, now at
Groote Schuur

Yet another point of contrast between the houses of Holland and South Africa is found in the structure of the gables, which in the former are built up of brick with decorations in carved stonework, while in the latter plaster-work takes the place of stone. In order to comprehend the architectural ideals which the seventeenth-century builders brought with them to the new land across the seas, and the manner in which these ideals were modified or altered in accordance with local conditions, we should compare their buildings with the old houses which are to be seen in every town in Holland. When we look at the gables of Amsterdam, in the *Roomolenstraat*, the *Brouwers-*

gracht, the Heerengracht, and many other streets, we may see the inspiration which lies behind the gables of Groot Constantia ; but in the farm-houses of Holland there is nothing resembling the H-houses



FANLIGHT IN TEAK AND PLASTER

Koopmans-de Wet House

of the old Cape burghers, which are peculiar to the Cape of Good Hope and were the product of local conditions and materials, under the combined inspiration of the East and the West.

It seemed worth while making some investigations as to the houses of the Dutch East Indies, built during the seventeenth and eighteenth

centuries, and my friend Violet Markham has sent me this extract from a diary kept during a visit to Batavia. It will be seen that though the Cape has much to lament in losses by fire and alterations it has also much for which to be thankful in the many beautiful houses which remain, in comparison with the few which seem to have survived in the East Indies, though these were doubtless more magnificent—as befitted the residences of the Company's high officials—than were the graceful homesteads of the Cape burghers.

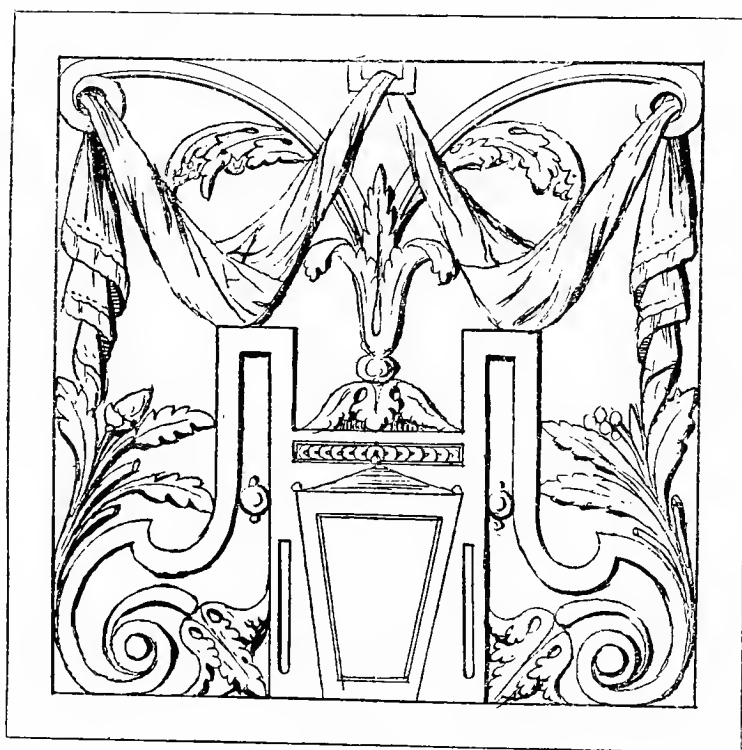
' I was unexpectedly successful in the matter of one house now the Mining Offices but formerly the old palace of the Governor-General. Here was the real old Colonial house of essential kinship to those of the Cape though the details differed in many respects, notably in the fact that it had an upper floor. I bearded the establishment and actually had the luck to run up against a clerk who had lived 16 years in South Africa and was full of enthusiasm about the old building. This house was built between 1750 and 1755 at the time of Governor Schreuder. Marshal von Doendels lived here for a brief period. You go up a flight of steps into a big hall divided in two by a row of columns. There was a low wainscoting of three rows of mauve-coloured tiles. The windows were large and of the sash variety, filled with small panes of what Mr. Holleman called "lila" panes—green and mauve tinted. There were rooms to right and left of this hall, a wide stoep at the back where a house looks over a garden half filled now with rubbish. And here was a real find, for the long row of buildings to the right and left (corresponding exactly with the slave quarters) were finished off with gables of the real South African type. Gables are practically non-existent in Batavia and I can hear of no others. There was a jolly old gateway crowned with stone vases at the end of the garden but it was sadly out of repair. But the real feature and glory of the house were the wonderful wood carvings over the doors. Each door was surmounted by a carved panel exactly like the Japanese "ramma" openwork for ventilation, and like the best Japanese ramma (save in the bedrooms) carved on both sides. The finely panelled doors were also surmounted by splendid wood carvings—shields, flowers, ribbons, &c. The staircase was rather cramped but at each landing it carried a beautiful carved basket of fruit and flowers in wood. Upstairs there was a most noble room running the whole breadth of the house some 24 yards long by 7 wide. At the front door the "ramma" was supported by classical pilasters. One sees this classical touch reproduced constantly in the modern houses.

' Altogether a great bit of good luck to have happened on this rare surviving example of old Dutch architecture in Batavia.

' I went on to the lower town. It conveys with its red roofs and canals the most extraordinary impression of a tropical Amsterdam. But the Chinese town has butted in unfortunately at this point and the jumble of ideas and houses in consequence is most extraordinary and most bewildering.

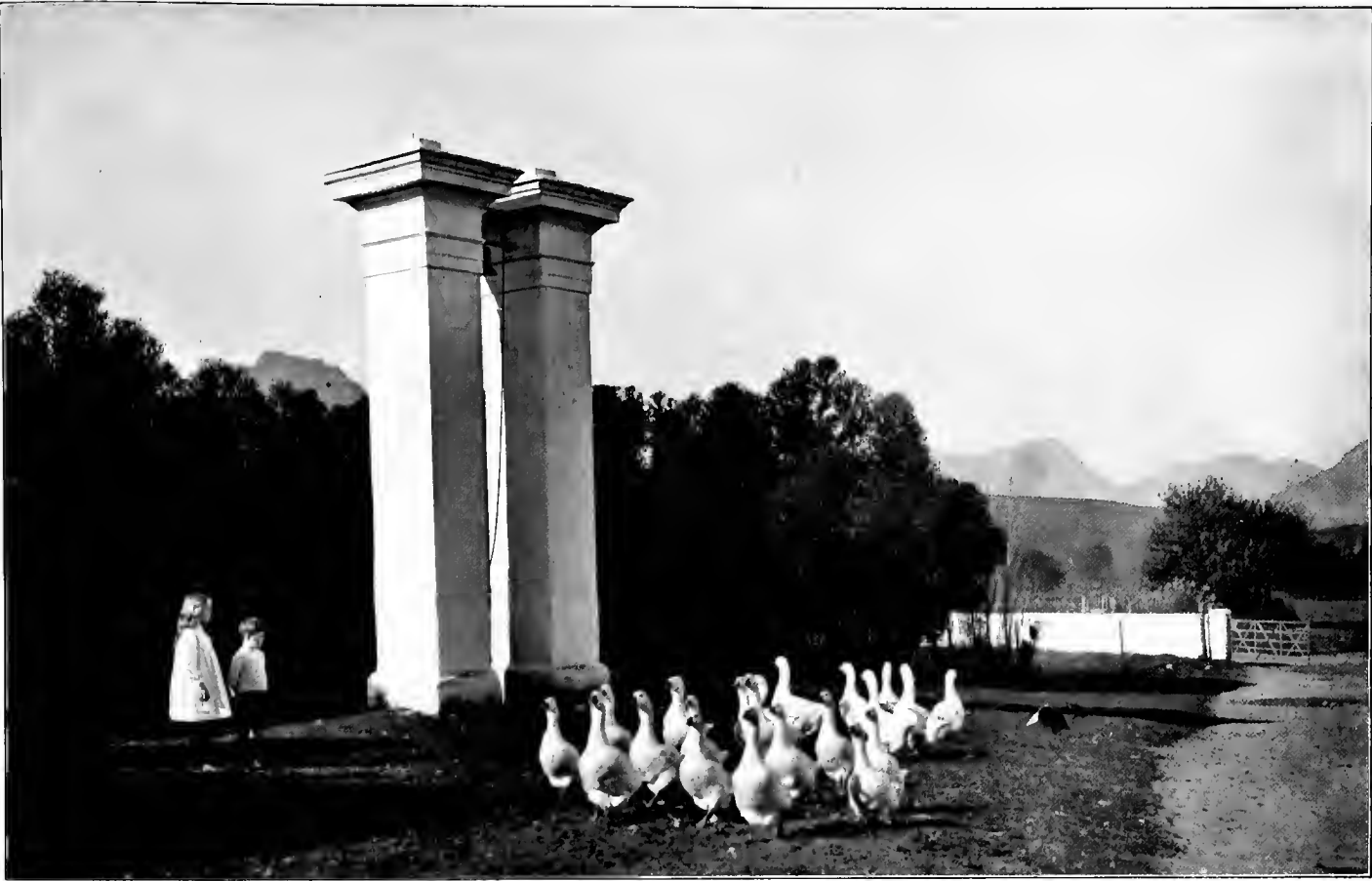
' I saw the old city gate, the Kleine Boom, which has nothing much to commend it except its age.

' I next happened on the old Stadthouse set on a high stoep and which still carries the date " 1707 den 2 Decembr " over the entrance. Here again were large sash windows with small panes and a fine carved staircase. Upstairs in a long sort of corridor ante-room I found a doorway decorated with a string of cockle shells and the same shell as exists over the door at Morgenster. In the Council Room there was a fine armoire crowned by the arms—of the Company ? Anyway, it consisted of two lions supporting an oval lozenge bearing a palm tree. There was a large tempera frieze in this room of the Judgement of Solomon. In this quarter I saw evident traces of old houses with white columns and rough plaster work over the fanlights of the windows. But it is only too evident little or nothing remains of the old days, and here as elsewhere in the East there is something about the climate or atmosphere which makes all buildings look the same age—whether built yesterday or two hundred years ago.'



OLD FANLIGHT

From a drawing by H. Schutte



TYPES OF SLAVE-BELL-TOWERS
AND VERGELEGEN BELL



THE OLD BURGHER WATCH HOUSE
Now the Michaelis Gallery



INTERIOR OF THE MICHAELIS GALLERY

II

OLD CAPE TOWN

THE stranger who walks up modern Adderley Street may well be pardoned if he sees nothing more in it than fine shops and offices, a railway station, a church, a large post-office, and a prosperous-looking bank. For there is little more to see.



THE OLD DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH

And indeed, all these things are necessary to the city's well-being and she would not be without them if she could. But we, in our turn, may be forgiven if we think that the old Heerengracht, with its gabled and thatched or flat-roofed houses, its shady canals and high stoeps, must have been more picturesque—if undeniably less utilitarian.

Once upon a time it was a street of private residences—large-roomed, dignified houses, with no monotonous level pavement before them, though this charming lack of uniformity left much to be desired by the pedestrian in wet weather, however pleasant it may have been for the owners of the obstructive high stoeps, whereon the old burghers and their wives sat with their pipes and coffee. At the head of the street on the left is a square white building, the old

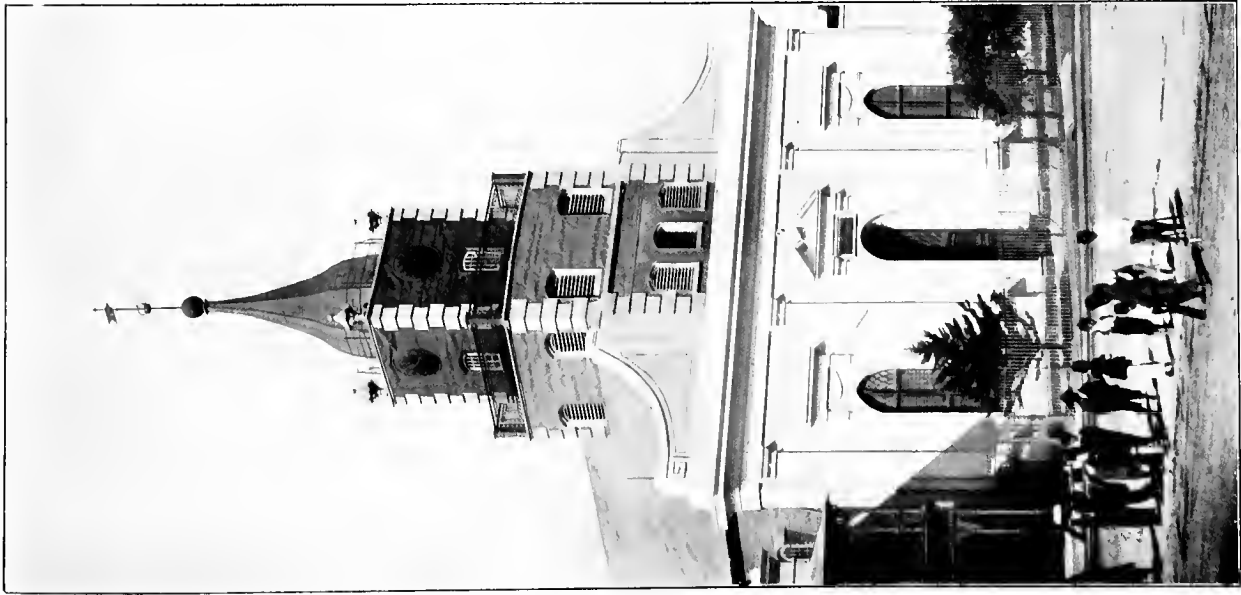
Slave Lodge founded by Simon van der Stel and now used as Government offices. In the courtyard of the Slave Lodge is the Supreme Court, built by Thibault in the beginning of the last century, now superseded by a newer building elsewhere. The one twisted chimney which remains to the Slave Lodge bears witness to the grace with which the old builders invested even the most sternly practical details—they seem to have formed lovely lines and curves for the sheer pleasure of forming them, as we see in such of their gables and walls as modern progress has left to us.

Below the Slave Lodge is the Dutch Reformed Church, built in the time of Willem Adriaan van der Stel and opened for service by Minister Kalden in 1704. It had fine gables in those early days, one looking towards Church Square, one over the Heerengracht, and yet another facing the mountain. Its roof was of brown thatch, smooth and shining, supported by columns, and on the walls were the monuments of the men who lay beneath the pavement—Simon van der Stel and many another. There, too, were hung the armorial hatchments which in the early days of the Cape were carried at the head of funeral processions, and there they might have remained to this day had not both monuments and hatchments been scattered to the winds when the church was rebuilt. A few of the latter were recovered by the Rev. H. C. V. Leibbrandt, in the tower which remains from the old church, but the majority are lost. Simon van der Stel's tomb has been described by passing travellers as of great beauty, but the only historic memorial remaining is the tombstone of Governor van Oudtshoorn, recently found in the churchyard and now set in the wall of the church. Anton Anreith's pulpit is a fine example of massive carving, though without the grace that marks his exquisite Constantia frieze, which breathes a Greek spirit for which perhaps it would be unreasonable to look within the walls of a Dutch Reformed Church.¹

On the other side of the Heerengracht, on the ground between Wale and Longmarket Streets, stood Simon van der Stel's hospital, where the scurvy-stricken sailors were nursed back to health after long months of peril and privation in the little ships which seem to us so singularly inadequate for covering half a world and back again. During the eighteenth century this hospital was broken down to

¹ Valentyn records seeing in the church a tombstone engraved 'Cornelia Six. 1681'. Jonkheer Six tells me that this was an elder sister of Simon van der Stel's wife, and that he has one of the silver medals given to those who attended her funeral. 'It shows

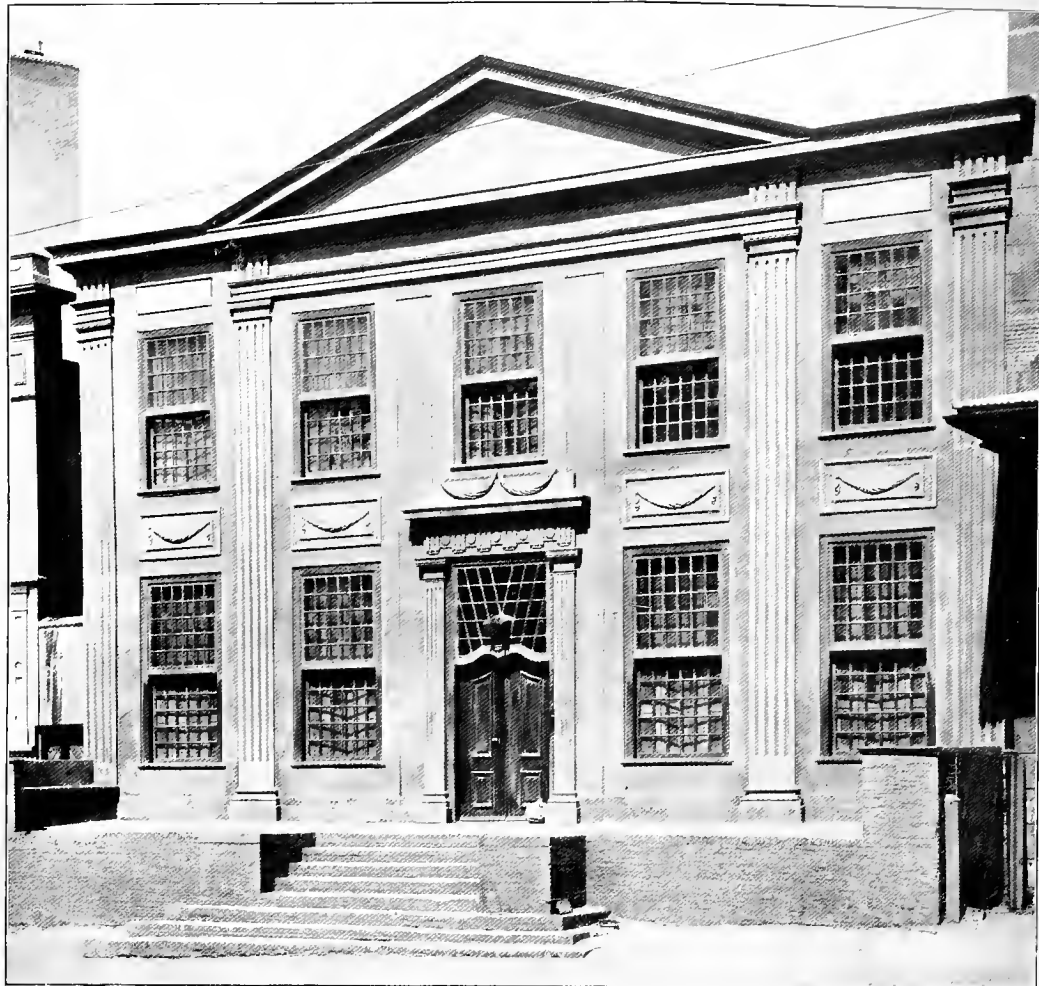
her bust in a serpent biting its tail, on the left a smoking lamp, on the right a small skull and broken leaf, with an inscription. The reverse shews her coat of arms quartered with that of her mother Hinlopen, covered by a helmet with a star as crest.'



LUTHERAN CHURCH



PORTION NOW DESTROYED OF OLD RESIDENCE
IN ROELAND STREET



THE KOOPMANS-DE WET HOUSE



HOUSE FORMERLY THE LUTHE

make way for dwelling-houses and, later on, these were replaced by prosperous shops and offices. A new hospital, afterwards used as barracks, was built in Caledon Square, and this too was broken down a few years ago.

In the centre of old Cape Town lies Greenmarket Square, where in the eighteenth century the farmers and market gardeners of the Cape brought their fruit and vegetables for sale. There were fine houses of the burghers round the square in those days, but these have been superseded by uninteresting blocks of shops and offices. Fate, which has dealt unkindly with the private houses, has however left to us the old house of the Burgher Senate, built in the time of Ryk Tulbagh as the Burgher Watch House and now the home of the fine group of Dutch paintings of the seventeenth century, collected by Sir Hugh Lane and presented to South Africa by Mr. Max Michaelis in 1914, through the medium of Lady Phillips.

The building is square and stately and the interior has been well adapted for use as a picture gallery by Mr. J. M. Solomon, whose untimely death is a very great loss to South Africa. It forms an appropriate and beautiful setting for the mellow canvasses that hang on the old walls which must often have looked down on just such a scene as that depicted for us by many Dutch painters, showing the grave burghers of the town sitting in council. Behind the building is a little formal garden, a pleasant place wherein to turn aside from the bustle of the streets ; on the hottest summer day the rooms of the gallery have that sense of cool restfulness which the eighteenth-century builders achieved by thick walls and lofty ceilings.

Many volumes have been written regarding the art of the Netherlands. We know that above all countries Holland produced great genre painters—a genre painting being interpreted to mean a picture of a scene of ordinary human life, without any religious or historical significance. The first half of the seventeenth century was very rich in Dutch painters of genre ; it was the blossoming period of Dutch art, and it is difficult to understand why so few old pictures of any merit should have come to light in South Africa when we remember that it was in the middle of this rich century that van Riebeeck laid the foundations of Cape Town. It is even probable that he was personally acquainted with some of the painters whose names are now held in reverence by us.

The problem becomes still more baffling when we think of the connexion between the van der Stels and the family of Six, the friends of Rembrandt, for Simon van der Stel's wife was Johanna Jacoba Six. She was with him in the East Indies, where their sons

were born, but did not accompany him to the Cape later on, and it is at least probable that at her house in Amsterdam, and in the family home of the Sixes, which was rich in works by the great master, her children would have acquired the love of art which marked her family. Pictures were not costly luxuries in those days—we know the tragic prices which some of the greatest painters received—did Simon van der Stel leave none behind him when he died at Groot Constantia? It is true that a passing traveller who visited Government House in the eighteenth century, during the time of Ryk Tulbagh, writes of the pictures that hung on the walls, but where are they to-day? I know of a few old Dutch paintings that have come to light at the Cape—a Hondecoeter, a van der Velde, and others, but their rarity makes the problem all the more profound. Perhaps in the loft of some Cape Dutch house there may still be hidden treasure, and some day the lost 'Minister Bogardus' of Frans Hals may be discovered among the discarded household belongings of some old family.

The gift of pictures now housed in the former home of the Burgher Council is of great value to South Africa, for it forms a link between seventeenth-century Holland and the little town at the foot of Table Mountain which was to grow into the Mother City of the Union. That is the historical side, and a valuable one, but we may also regard them as rendering an incomparable service to the art student and the picture lover. For as you stand before these pictures there comes to you a sense of what this art of Holland was, that owed little to France or Italy, that was pent within her own dykes and borders, that drew no inspiration from her stern Calvinistic church, that depicted perforce the little things of life, because saints and virgins and lofty mountains and mighty torrents were outside her sphere, but brought to the portrayal of those little things the great genius which only found expression with the freedom of the people. And you do not need to stand there long to realize that there is more real beauty in the homely woman painted by Hals than in a Mater Dolorosa of Carlo Dolci.

The pictures in the gallery have often been described, but there are many points of view from which they may be regarded. Take, for example, the mere subject-matter. There are the portraits, in which may in several instances be traced a resemblance of type to familiar Dutch faces in South Africa. Then there are pictures of churches and houses in which there is no great similarity to the old Cape buildings, a testimony to the original lines induced by the difference in climate, material, and workmen, while the fruit and

flower pictures show that we have not progressed very far beyond the peaches and grapes of van Beyeren or the carnations of van Es.

Any one who has seen Rembrandt's famous 'Night Watch' (so-called) in the Royal Museum at Amsterdam can picture the scene when the Burgher Watch of old Cape Town assembled in the fine building or in the square outside. When the Burgher Senate was established in 1797 its meetings were held here, and in later years it became the Town House and on its walls were hung for the first time the Arms of the City of Cape Town, granted by Commissioner de Mist in 1804.

It is a fine, square building of the Renaissance type, with the great sash-windows which were introduced into England by Dutch William but probably came to the Cape at an earlier period, as we find them on Simon van der Stel's Groot Constantia. The fan-lights on the front of the building are very fine and they have been skilfully copied in making such alterations as were necessary for the reception of the pictures. None of the old features have been lost, and the removal of partition walls of a late date has restored the rooms to all their former spaciousness and dignity. The teak-panelled Council Chamber might well be the scene of the meeting of the Clothmakers' Guild or of any other civic gathering in old Amsterdam.

To Governor Tulbagh's time, too, belongs the Lutheran Church in Strand Street, then Zee Straat, built by Martin Melck. Within is a fine pulpit, carved by Anton Anreith, by whom also the doors and windows were designed, and in the vestry hang his original sketches and plans. In the van der Stel days grants of building-land in Strand Street were made to Willem ten Damme, Jan Brommert, Henning Huysing, Reynier Smedinga, and other worthies and unworthies of the time. Huysing's grant covered the entire block between Burg Street and the present St. George's Street, and above it—on Smedinga's land—stands the Koopmans-de Wet house. Part of this is undoubtedly the original building of 1701, though Dr. Purcell, who made a careful examination, thought that the front was rebuilt towards the end of the eighteenth century. Tradition ascribes the façade to Thibault, but it is of a style common to most of the houses which were built in Cape Town during the eighteenth century. Few of these dignified old buildings remain as residences. Modern progress has transformed into a busy city the town in which the early burghers had their pleasant dwellings, with flat roofs on which to take the air and high stoeps on which to sit and smoke and drink coffee after the heat of the day. Many of the old houses are stores or tenements in which crowd the coloured folk whose grand-

fathers and grandmothers were slaves to the burghers of former days, or they have been pulled down to make way for prosperous shops.

Above the town, towards the Signal Hill, lies the Malay quarter, where linger picturesque houses with high stoeps and curved parapets. Cape Town is a place of many creeds and many churches—Christian, Hebrew, and Mohammedan. And of these latter even the orthodox Sunni will find himself confronted with the non-conforming Shiah, who keeps the feast of Hoseyn with a zeal which sometimes leads to breaches of the peace. Upon which follow bewilderment and confusion in the minds of policemen and other officials, to whom one Moslem is very like another, and who know nothing and care less for the subtle distinctions which divide the Children of the Prophet. There is an Oriental side to Cape Town which only he may fully see who sits with the old Imaums on their high stoeps in the Malay quarter, or visits the mosques which their courtesy permits him to enter.

In the heart of old Cape Town lies an oblong plantation. Government House and its gardens have encroached on its ancient boundaries; the Houses of Parliament stand where once flourished palms and myrtle hedges; the South African College has grown into it from the south-west—the Cathedral from the north-east. To-day it is the Municipal Gardens. Its oaks and magnolias shade few but the leisured wanderers who find a temporary resting-place on the city's benches, save when the Curator's chrysanthemums draw flower-lovers to exult in the glory of orange and purple and crimson among the late Jupiter's Lightning roses. The heart of South Africa. The little seed from which has sprung a mighty tree. This, and no less, is this garden, cramped and hemmed in to-day, but still rich with the loveliness of the bygone years. For romance, which lingers so tenderly around the white gables of the Cape homesteads, which dwells in every stone and shadow of the mountain, clings with an abiding fragrance to this old garden of the Dutch East India Company.

On the site of the present Government House in the Gardens stood the Guest House built by Simon van der Stel for the accommodation of such passing guests as it was not convenient to house in the Castle. It was incorporated in the present building, which has been added to by successive governors and still retains a great measure of old-world charm. It was here that Père Tachard with five other Jesuits were lodged in 1685, when the scientific expedition sent by Louis XIV to China and the Indies called at the Cape of Good Hope.

'About the middle of the wall,' writes the Father, 'on that side which looks to the Fort, there is a little Banquet-House where nobody lives. The lower Story of it consists of a Porch open to the Garden and the Fort, with two little Halls on each side ; over that there is a Pavilion open every way, between two Tarasses paved with Brick, and railed about ; the one looking towards the North and the other to the South. This Pavilion seemed to be purposely made for



- The Company's Guest-House, now Government House
with the Castle in the background

From the *Voyage de Siam* by Père Tachard. Paris, 1689

our Design ; for on the one side we discovered the North, the View whereof was absolutely necessary to us, because it is the South in relation to that Country. Whil'st they were preparing that Pavilion, which with the Dutch I shall call our Observatory, we went on Board to give the Ambassador and our Fathers an account of all that had past.'¹

The South African College, in the upper part of the Gardens—you enter through Anreith's gateway—stands on the site of the

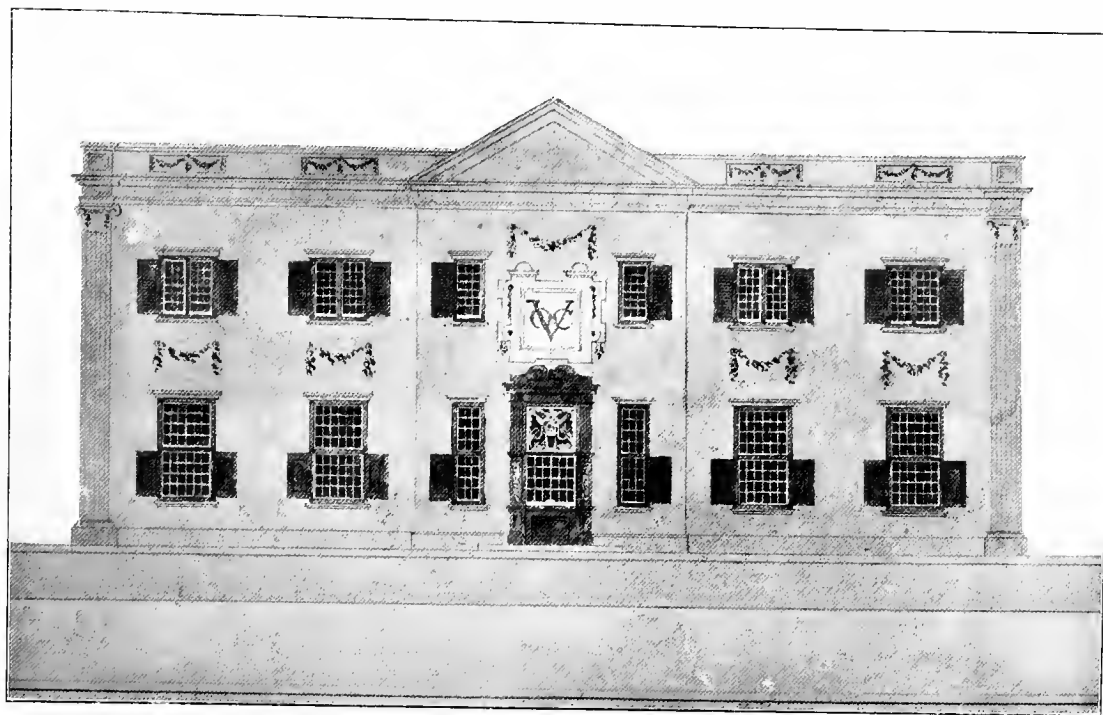
¹ From the English translation, published 1688.

Company's Menagerie and below it was the Melk Hok. Did dainty ladies fare to the Melk Hok to drink syllabub and buttermilk, with toy milking-stools under their arms, while their cavaliers in curled wigs and silk stockings carried the milk pails? There need be no restriction upon the imagination, for little is known of it beyond its name and situation.

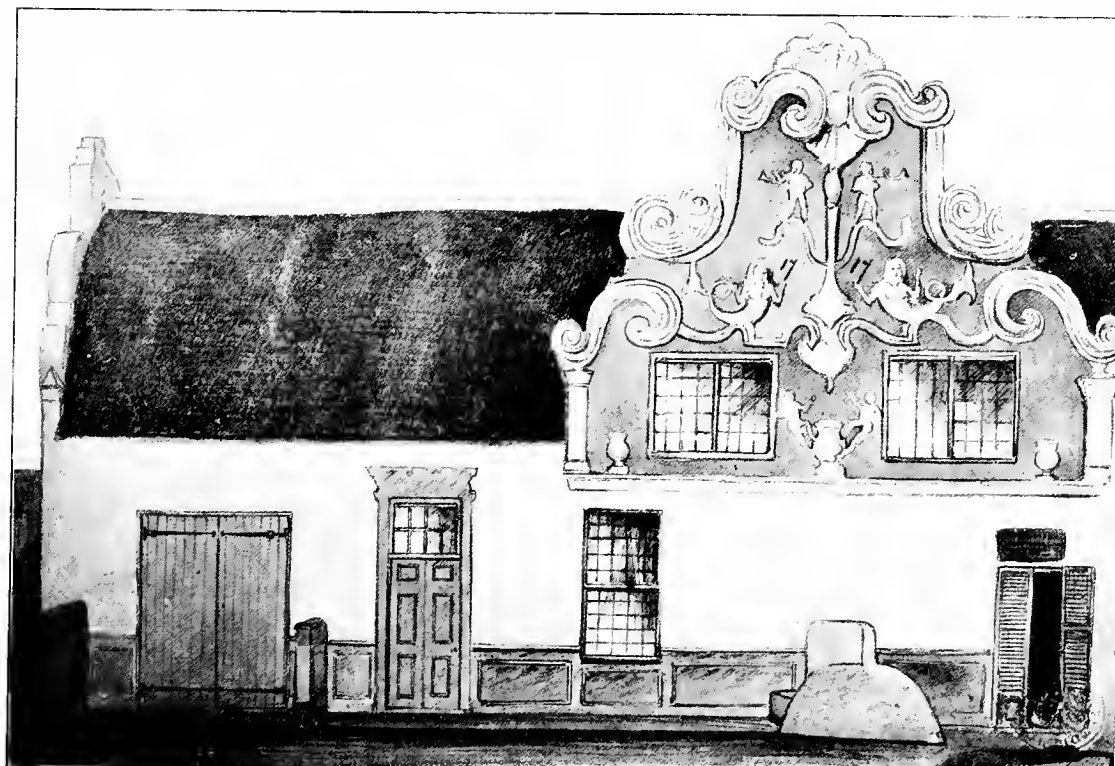
Much imagination is needed, in truth, to recreate early Cape Town, the Mother City of South Africa, from the prosperous streets and thriving shops of to-day. In the garden of van Riebeeck and the van der Stels something of the old spirit still lingers, and, when the key of the gate is turned at evening on the last loitering visitor and the stars shine out in the velvet sky, memory peoples the alleys and lawns with the shades of bygone years. Van Riebeeck, the van der Stels, and Kolbe who so ill-requited their hospitality, Père Tachard from the Guest House, Anreith the sculptor, de la Caille the astronomer, the kindly and learned Pieter Kalden, Ryk Tulbagh, brave Janssens, Lady Anne Barnard, Sir Harry Smith, and a hundred more.

As of old, the night-moths flutter heavily from one sweet-scented flower to another, the trees rustle and whisper in the soft breeze, the great rock keeps sentinel-ward behind the garden and city, or the wild south-easter pours a sheet of moonlit vapour over the mountain's face, whirling the petals from the roses, stripping the leaves from the palms in the old Company's garden that whisper and rustle where Cecil Rhodes points northward—hurrying them down the old Heerengracht to lay them at the feet of Jan van Riebeeck as he watches over his town. And a few fragrant petals drift farther on the night-wind and are carried out to sea in the track of Willem Adriaan van der Stel.

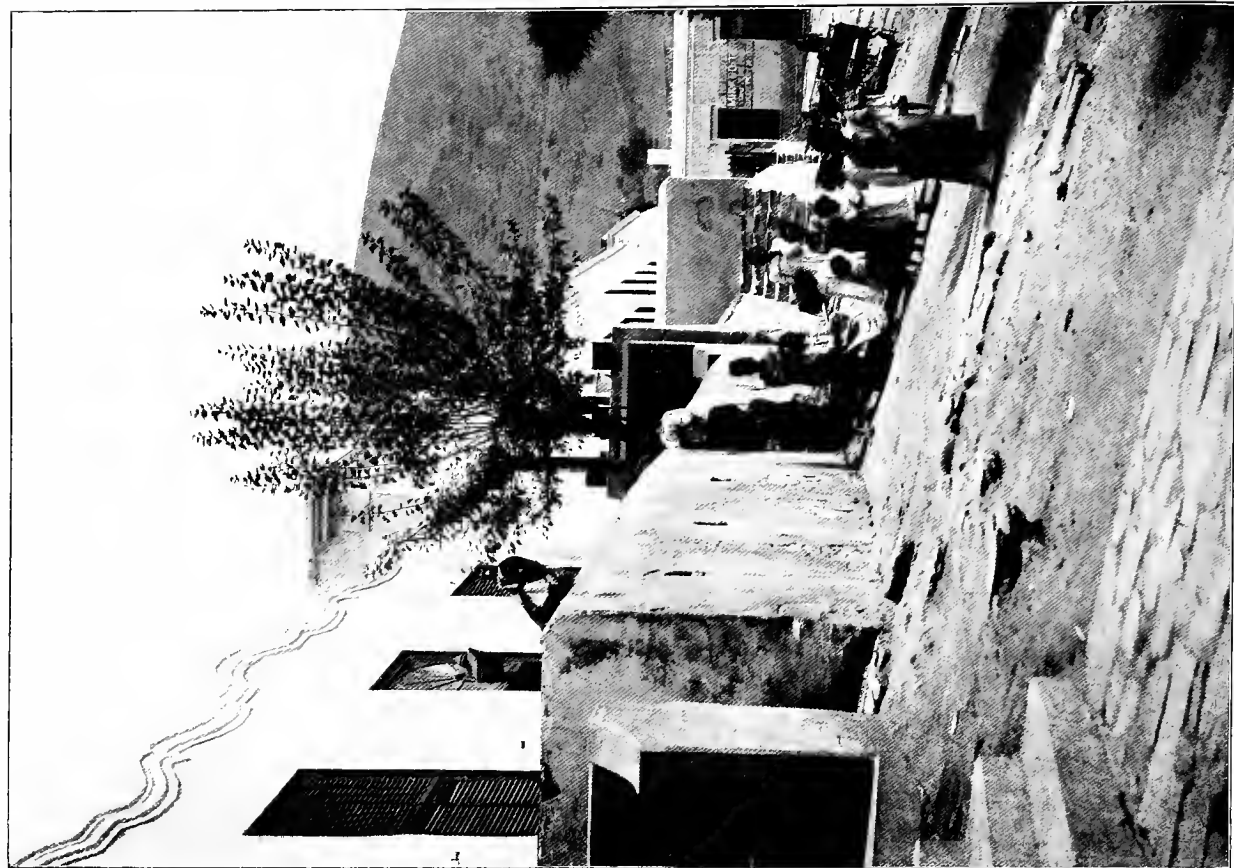
A very early description of the new settlement has been left to us by John Nieuhoff, who first visited the Cape in December 1653. I quote from the English translation of 1703. Van Riebeeck is described as having a dwelling in the Fort, with 'a well-planted garden of fifteen acres. Upon the banks of the Salt River is likewise a small Redoubt. Behind the Fort, all along the banks of the River, are many fine Plantations or Gardens, which produce Cabbages and such-like Herbages, being cultivated by certain Hollanders who have settled there . . . The Dutch have planted many thousands of Vines on a Hill adjacent to the Fort, they bear very plentifully but the wine is of a Crab-like taste'. There is a fine description of what the old translator calls 'Pinguwyns, Flamingos, Iron Piggs [meaning porcupines], Sea Cows, Lyons, Jackalls, Tygers, and the Hottentots'



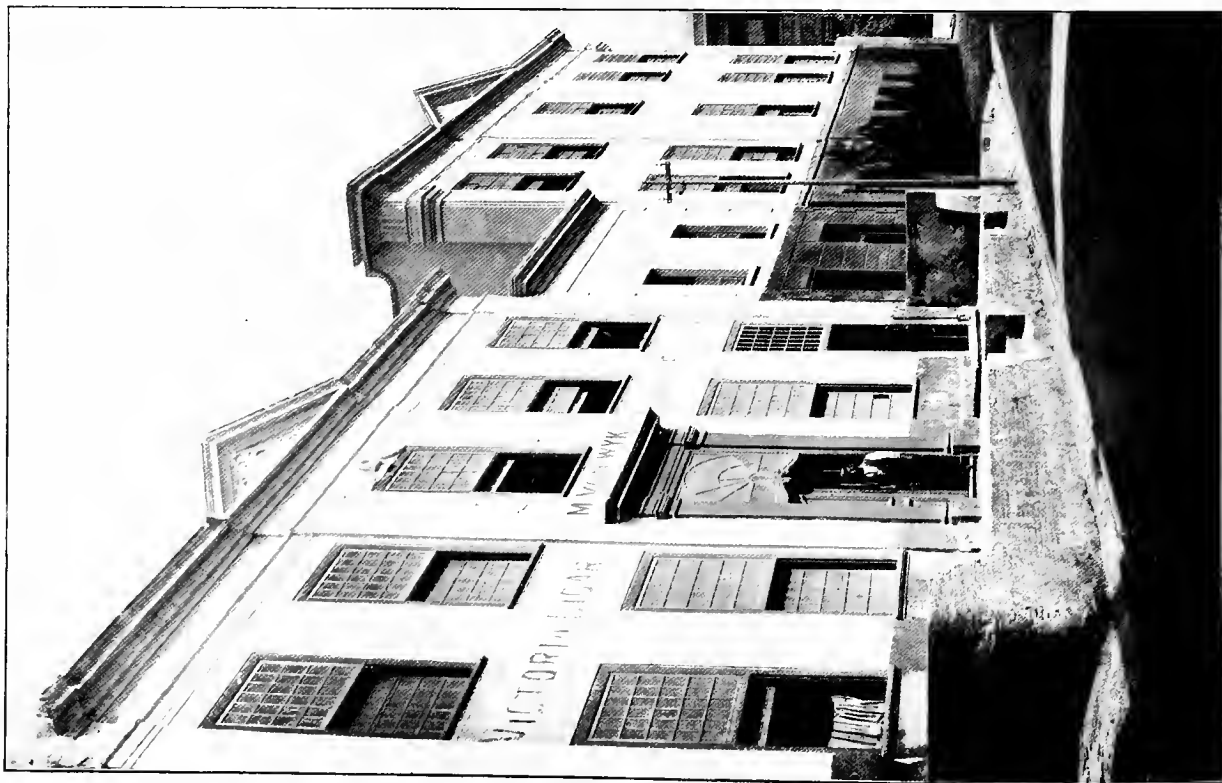
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, CAPE TOWN
The front, in the time of the Dutch East India Company
From a drawing by Schutte



A TAVERN IN DORP STREET
Built in 1717, since destroyed by fire



OLD HOUSES IN THE MALAY QUARTER



XVIII C. HOUSES IN CAPE TOWN

Fish, the latter so called because the Hottentots are very dexterous in taking them'.

Nieuhoff gives a quaint account of a jaunt in the company of Commander van Riebeeck and his wife. 'The next day, being informed that a Whale was got on shoar in the Salt River, the Governor and his Lady, our Master of the ship and I, went thither to see it, it was a very large one ; we got upon the back of it whilst the Trumpet sounded merrily, and the Negros were busied in cutting great pieces of the Flesh, which they buried in the Sand in order to eat them.'

Picnics to the sound of trumpets were apparently a favourite form of diversion in those early days. Valentyn, the learned divine, in his book of travels published in 1724-6, records two such expeditions, organized by Simon van der Stel, to the top of the Lion's Head mountain ; one in 1685, when he was accompanied by the Juffrouw de Man, wife of the Secunde, 'and the people of most importance at the Cape, with several young ladies'. The other and earlier occasion was a picnic in honour of the wife of Rykloff van Goens, Governor-General of the East Indies, and in this instance too, he was accompanied by a merry crew 'who now and then fired a shot ; they made a great fire, and sometimes sounded a blare on a trumpet and beat a drum and frightened away all the wild animals in the neighbourhood. Nevertheless', he adds, 'of all the people to whom I have spoken, no one expressed any desire to go up again.' Simon van der Stel erected on the mountain a monument of brick, between six and seven feet high, bearing an inscription carved on a smooth black stone, in memory of this frolic.

The temptation to quote from the various travellers who passed through Cape Town during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is great. Thunberg, a Professor of Botany at Upsala, who arrived at the Cape in 1772, writes as follows :

'In the Company's garden there was a very beautiful covered walk, formed of chestnut trees, which were now very thick and large. It was this year cut down, root and branch, by order of the Governor [van Plettenberg], for the purpose of making different kind of furniture of its elegant wood ; and in its stead were planted oaks . . . Besides a handsome house, built in the Company's garden in town, the Governor has also one at Rondebosch [Rustenburg] and another at Nieuwland [Newlands House], both out of town, to which he may retire at pleasure and unbend his mind when oppressed with cares of state. Another such house was now to be built likewise, for his accommodation, at Baay-fals.'

Le Vaillant writes in 1781 of the 'spacious and handsome houses' of the Cape, which contain 'no frivolous luxuries ; the furniture is simple, yet neat and handsome ; they use no hangings, pictures

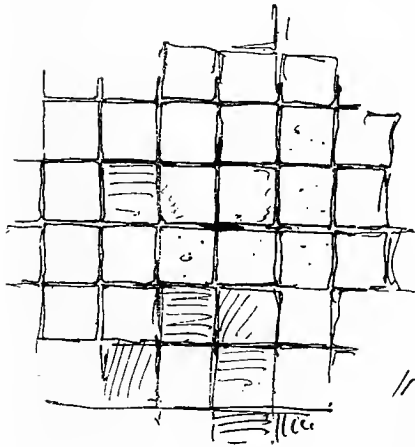
and looking-glasses are the principal ornaments'. Many others have written of old Cape Town, but I have only space for one more quotation, in which the writer draws largely on the descriptions given by earlier travellers, though the book is called *A new description of the Cape of Good Hope* (*Nieuwste Beschryving van de Kaap*). By Carel Frederik Brink. Published at Amsterdam in 1778.

'In Table Valley there are the town, the fortress, and the gardens of the Company. The town is situated on the edge of the sea, and extends from the shore into the valley; it is fairly large, built with regularity, with wide streets and consisting of more than twelve hundred houses. The earliest houses were built for the most part of brick, on a good-sized piece of land and in the first instance were only one storey high, but now the greater number are of two and sometimes three storeys. In the front they have a large court, which makes a pleasant entrance, and behind them are beautiful gardens. One observes in them an air of Dutch elegance, except that in the place of tiles they are covered with thatch, which somewhat detracts from the beauty of the town. But nothing else can be done, because of the frequent storms, particularly of those south winds of which we have already spoken, which carry off the tiles and even sometimes the roofs themselves, at the risk of crushing people and animals in the streets and in the houses. Formerly there were pent-houses on either side of the buildings, where one might take shelter from the rain, but, apart from being eye-sores and cramping the view, they were inconvenient and dangerous. For the Hottentots and the sailors, who love smoking, crowded there for this purpose and were sometimes the cause of fires. Therefore the Government was not content merely in pulling down the pent-houses but forbade smoking in the streets. As, despite this, the Hottentots and sailors continued to smoke, this warning has not only been renewed but the offenders have been threatened with a severe punishment; all who transgress against the rule are to be placed in the pillory and severely beaten.

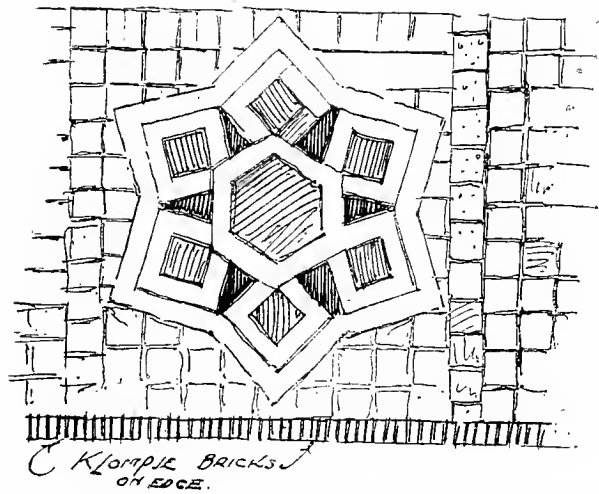
'The most beautiful street or canal is that which is called the Heerengracht. It is bordered with oaks and follows the course of a canal, while along it are built the finest houses. This street makes a turning at the corner. During the last thirty years the town has grown considerably and has been enlarged by several streets, so that it now extends close to Table Mountain.

'Having spoken of the town in general we will now give a detailed description of the public buildings which add not a little to its lustre and beauty. The first which merits remark is the Castle, where the Governor and the principal officers of the Company have their dwellings. In the early days of the colony van Riebeeck, who was then only Commander and was afterwards the first Governor of the Cape, had built a four-square mud fortress, and constructed within the walls houses for himself and his suite, besides the magazines necessary for guarding merchandize, as I have already said. But in the years 1664 and 1665 a regular fort was built, which in the year 1672 was altered into a castle. This castle is a perfect pentagon, flanked with many outworks and well provided with all necessary munitions of war, to defend the port and town against incursions of the enemy. On two sides of the Castle there are batteries which flank

TYPICAL .. PAVINGS ..

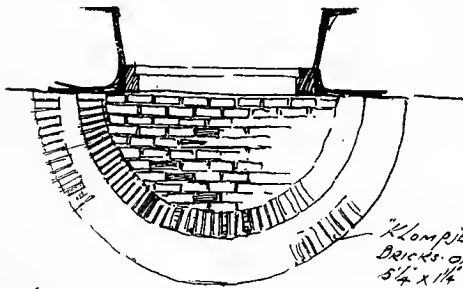


INTERNAL
PAVING.
16" x 16" RED BATAVIAN
TILES OILED.



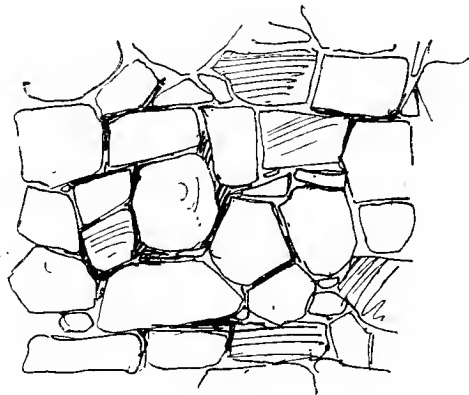
STONE & TILE PAVING

Colours:-
BLUE & RED STONE
RED & BLUE TILES



BRICK
PAVING.

"Klompje"
BRICKS ON EDGE.
5 1/4" x 1 1/4"



ROUGH IRREGULAR
BLUE MOUNTAIN STONE



COBBLE
PAVING.
RADIATING RIBS
IN PICKED STONES.

TH
New & Sub
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the whole Bay, where there is an anchorage for vessels which could not be sufficiently defended by a bulwark. One of the batteries is situated to the west of the Castle on the Lion's Head, or rather on the tail of the Lion's mountain, a little within the Bay, and it is the stronger of the two. The other is placed near the Salt River to the East of the Castle and is joined to it by a path. The Governor and the principal officers of the Company have fine residences there, where are also to be found great depots and magazines for the Company's goods.

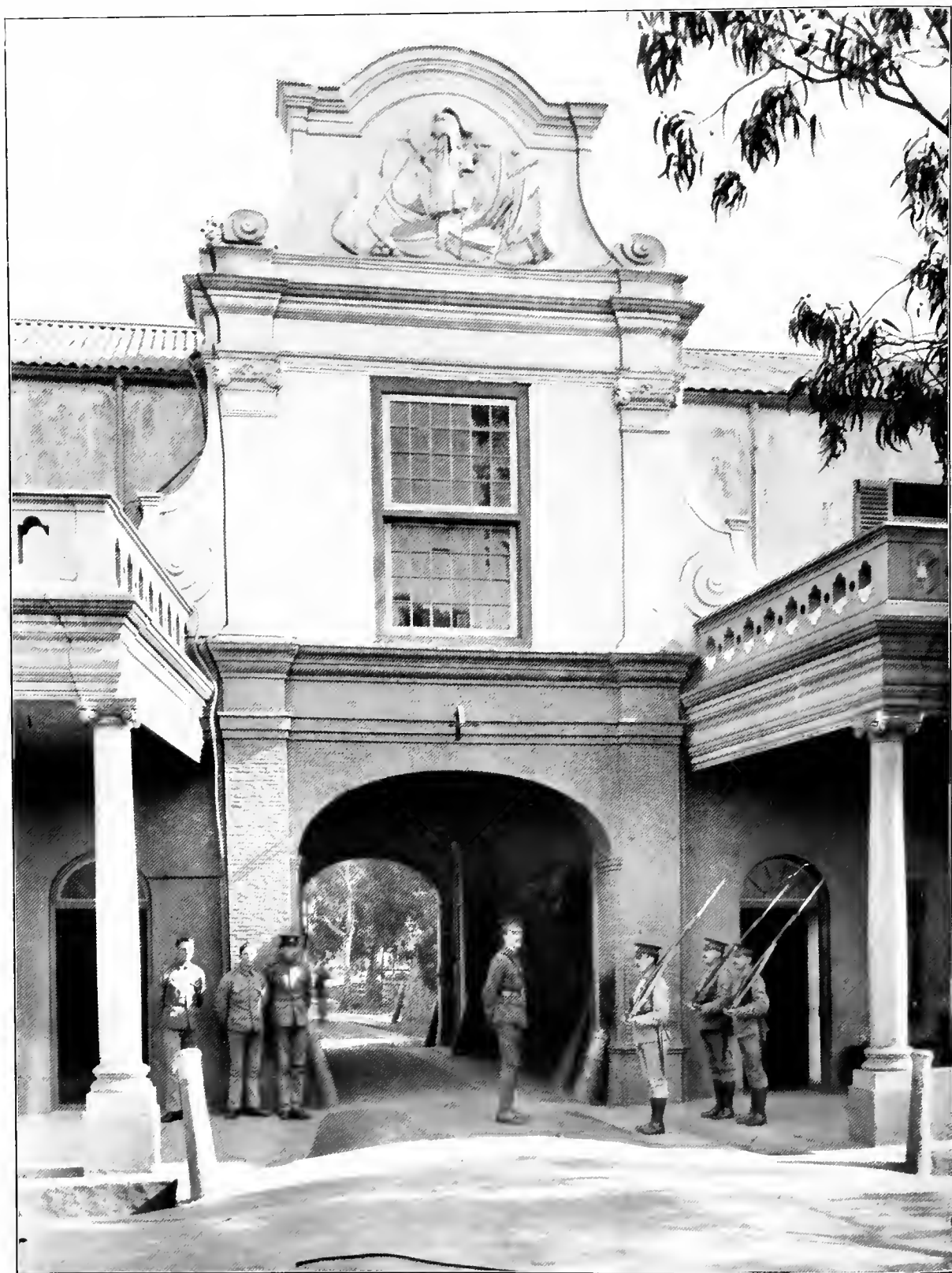
'The second of the public buildings, which contributes not a little to the embellishment and size of the town, is the Hospital for the sick, which has experienced the same fate as the Castle, having developed from a mean little building into a large and stately edifice. In fact, Commander van Riebeeck, being a clever man and very experienced in the art of healing, knowing how the sick fared on board the ships, was not long in realizing the necessity and usefulness of such a building in so renowned a rest-place. Consequently, he built one close to the shore, so that it might be convenient to carry there the sick from the vessels, so that they could procure the treatment necessary for their restoration to health. But the progress of the Company's navigation in the East Indies was so great that this house was found too small for the reception and care of the sick on the vessels which arrived from Holland or the Indies. Consequently, the Governor, Simon van der Stel, decided to build a house which should be much larger and more convenient for the sick, and to use the old one as a magazine for storing ships' provisions, ropes, fish-oil, sails, &c., in order that they might be always at hand when the ships needed them and could be furnished quickly.

'He therefore chose a convenient and airy place, which had until then been a garden and which adjoined the large garden of the Company, of which the sick could have a pleasant view when they were well enough to leave their beds. This building was constructed in the form of a cross and was well decorated, the walls a good thickness, and it is both long and wide. The longest part is from the upper door, which looks into the Company's garden, to the door which leads to the town, and is large enough to hold a hundred patients; the cross-way, which extends from the great door which faces the church to the one which looks out upon the Lion's mountain, is for the greater part left free, to serve as a passage for those who visit or who care for the sick. It is not, however, altogether useless, for it is used for those who have broken arms or legs or for those at the point of death. Each of these lies on a mattress, on a bed to himself, round which people can come and go, but others which are not in such great danger nor so afflicted lie on wooden beds, after the Dutch manner, which run the length of the walls and are joined one to the other as if they were in one piece. Thus along the walls of the two sides one hundred patients may be accommodated and cared for, and more than sixty down the middle. On either side of the great door, as well as of that in the rear facing the Lion's mountain, there are large glass windows of which some are opened in fine weather or when there is too much heat in the house, in order to admit the air freely, but these windows are barred, to prevent the escape of convalescents.'

It will be remembered that this hospital stood in the present Adderley Street, opposite the Dutch Reformed Church.



ENTRANCE TO THE CASTLE



THE CASTLE GATEWAY FROM WITHIN

III

THE CASTLE

HEMMED in between the railway and the road, on the outskirts of the modern, busy city of Cape Town, lies the old fortress which was once the central point of civilization in all Africa south of the equator.

Obsolete it may be, inadequate as a means of protection against the smallest cruiser that carries a six-inch gun; but it is an heritage from the hands of those who laid the foundations upon which has been reared the South Africa of to-day. This was not the first fortress built at the Cape by the Dutch East India Company. Its predecessor, the Fort of Good Hope, built by van Riebeeck soon after landing in 1652, lay on the present Grand Parade, somewhere behind the Post Office, and was merely a collection of low wooden houses and a square stone tower surrounded by walls of earth—a pitifully slender means of defence against wild beasts and marauding Hottentots, and practically useless against trained European troops.

But for a while it was all the protection which the brave little handful of settlers had, and, but for the war which broke out with England, and the consequent loss of the Dutch West India Company's possessions in North America, which galvanized the directors into action, the new settlement might have remained indefinitely at the mercy of any passing ship. It must have cost them an effort to give the order for the building of a strong stone fortress, for economy was the keynote of their administration of the Cape. That it could ever become more than a mere provision station does not appear to have entered their minds. However, even a provision station had to be protected, if they did not wish to see it fall into the hands of Charles II or Louis XIV according to circumstances; so, in 1665, the order was given for the building of the Castle of the Cape of Good Hope.

The plan chosen by the directors is one common to fortresses of the period, and is in the form of a five-pointed star—a pentagonal bastioned fort on Vauban's system. An engineer, named Pieter Dombaer, was selected to superintend the work. Commander Wagenaar was instructed to detain three hundred soldiers from passing ships and to employ them in preparing stones and other material

for building. The Commissioner, Isbrand Goske, was appointed to choose a site for the fortress. Convicts and slaves were sent to Robben Island for shells for lime, and to Hout Bay for wood—it is easy to realize the activity and bustle which stirred the little settlement in Table Valley.

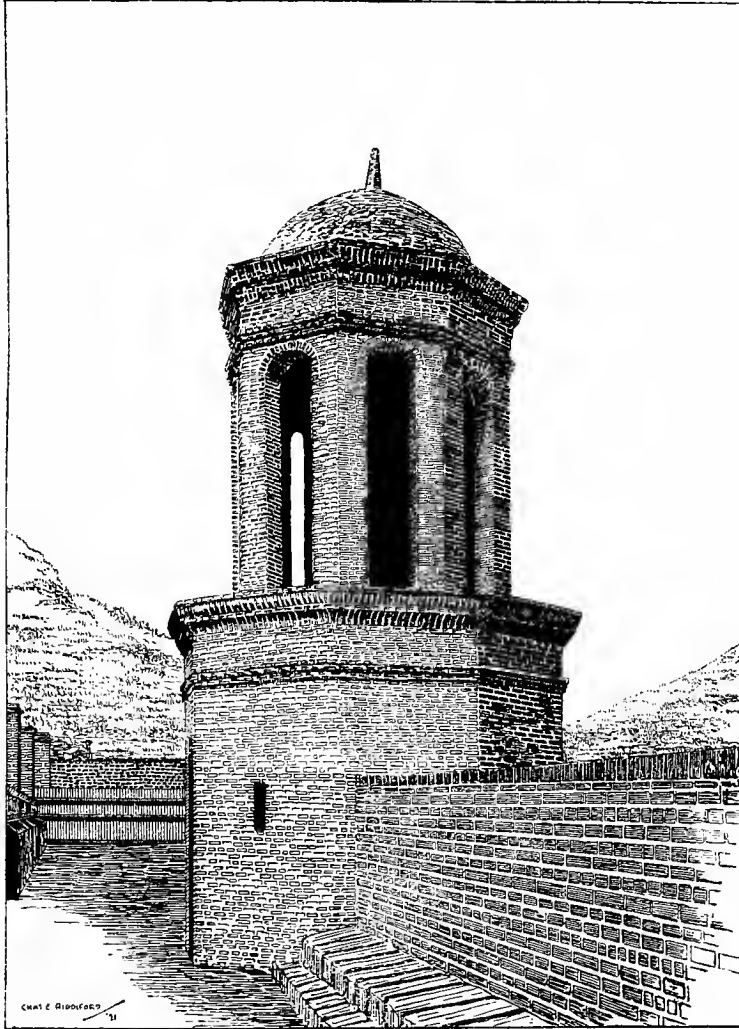
Isbrand Goske landed on August 8, 1665, and eight days later, with the approval of the Council of Policy and the chief naval and military officers present, he chose the site of the Castle. The preparation of materials and digging of trenches occupied the five months that followed, and, on January 2, 1666, the first stones of the Castle were laid with great ceremony and rejoicing. There were four of these stones, and they were laid by the Commander Zacharias Wagenaar, the Minister Johannes van Arckel, the Secunde Abraham Gabbema, and the Fiscal Hendrik Lacus. A great feast followed, at which a poem was recited, which so impressed the Commander that he caused it to be inscribed in the Archives. Regarded as poetry it is not a great success, but there were more workers than poets among the brave men and women who stood within the Castle foundations on that January day two hundred and fifty years ago.

A fortnight later they met again on the same spot, to bury within the shelter of the rising walls the body of Johannes van Arckel. No record of his grave remains—the pioneers of South Africa are better known by their works than by their monuments.

Eight years passed before the fortress was sufficiently advanced for the garrison to move into it from the old fort of Jan van Riebeeck, which was shortly afterwards broken down. A few weeks later, in July 1674, came news of peace which had been concluded with England, and, with the news, the building impetus appears to have ceased. With the removal of the immediate danger of invasion came the opportunity for the work that was urgently needed elsewhere, and from this date to the arrival of Simon van der Stel in 1679 there were but few European workmen employed on the Castle. The excavation of the moat was, however, pushed forward during this period, chiefly on the initiative of Governor Bax, who decreed that every one who passed the Castle, male or female, rich or poor, should assist in the work by carrying out a certain quantity of earth in baskets. The Governor and his wife and child, the officials and burgher-councillors and their wives, set the example. It was a fine illustration of the civic spirit which was shared by all. On February 10, 1679, news was received of the conclusion of peace between France and the Netherlands, an event which was immediately celebrated by withdrawing the remaining European labourers from the work. In the same year

the five bastions of the star were given their names of Orange, Nassau, Catzenellenbogen, Buuren, and Leerdam.

If you walk round the Castle and look carefully at its walls, you will notice that there is a faint, irregular, horizontal line about



THE WATCH TOWER

two-thirds of the way up. It has been suggested that this marks the height to which the walls were taken in the first instance. Just where this line occurs, in the point nearest to the railway, is a stone inscribed 'Ludovicus, 1667'. I have been able to find no record which mentions any one of this name in connexion with the building. The stone may have been used originally in some other connexion and

have been regarded simply as building material—as was the Post Office stone recently removed to the Museum from the Leerdam point.¹

The Castle precincts are entered to-day through a gateway facing the town, and the gate-pillars are decorated with Anton Anreith's lionesses. The original gateway faced the sea, close to where the old jetty ran out. It was decided by Simon van der Stel in 1682 to close it and build another for the better security of the Fort. Passing through the lioness gate you come to the actual entrance, the gateway above which are the arms of the Chambers of the Dutch East India Company—Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Delft, Hoorn, Middelburg, and Enkhuysen, flanked by the Company's monogram and surmounted by the lion of Holland. The gables are not unlike those of Groot Constantia and are attributed to Simon van der Stel. Over the gateway hangs the old Castle bell—as it has hung for over two hundred years. It bears the following inscription :

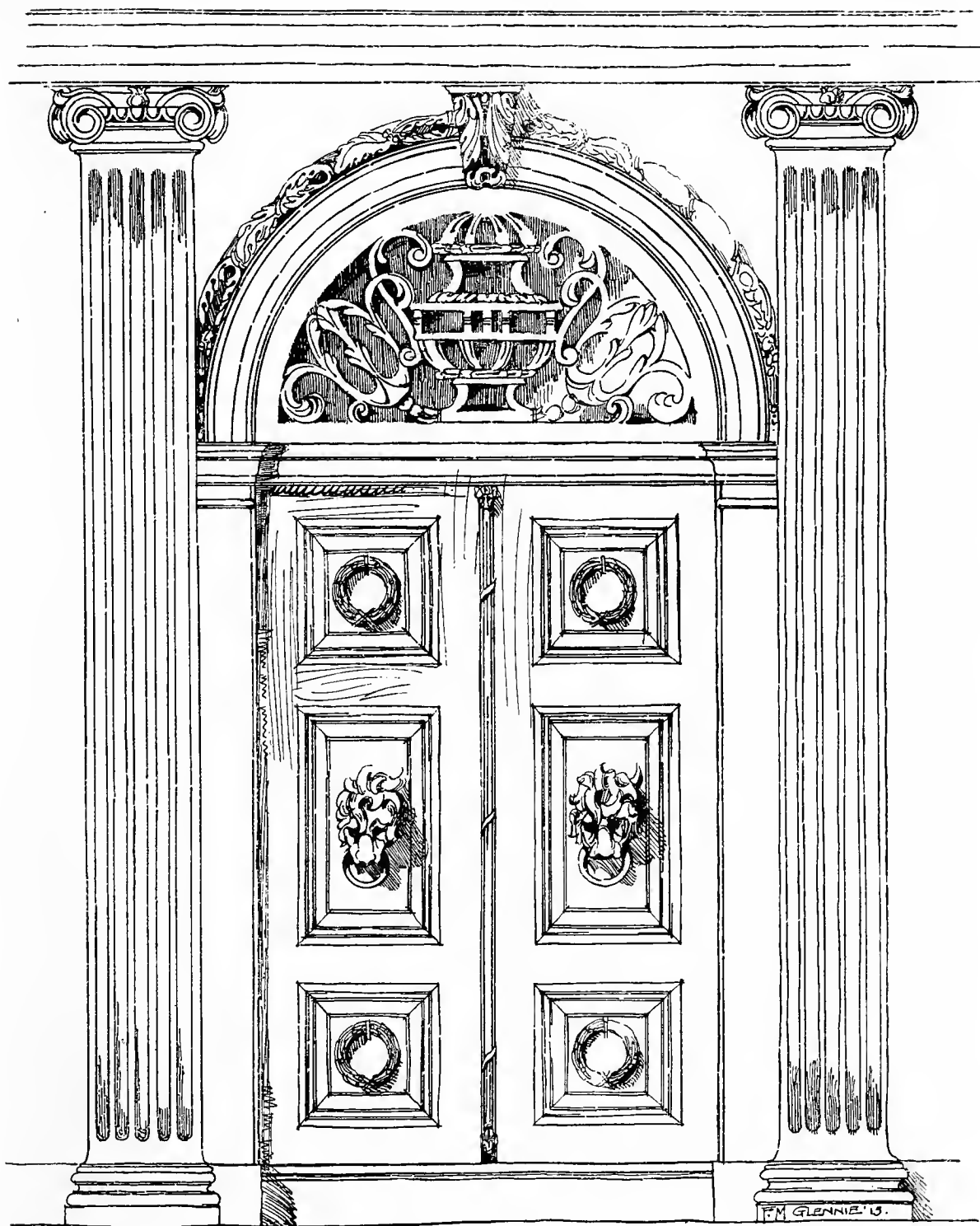
‘ Benedicat Terra Dominum : laudet et superexaltet eum in saecula.
Claudifremi me fecit. Amstellodami, Anno 1697.’

Besides raising the walls to the necessary height the van der Stels are responsible for the fine houses within the fortress, the residences of the Governor and the Secunde, on the right and left of the sundial as you face it, and the house of the Admiral of the Fleet, at a right angle to the Governor's house, and now used as the General's office. This building, which still retains many fine features, was probably used as the Governor's residence before the great Government House was built on the cross wall. The Government House and the Secunde's residence form the dividing line between the outer and the inner courts. Under the latter house lie the grain cellars of which Simon van der Stel wrote with pride in his dispatches to the Company—their vaulted ceilings might serve as an example to modern architects. The old Government House itself retains many of its early features, and there yet remains the dignified Council Hall of Simon van der Stel with its fine windows—the room in which Lady Anne Barnard gave those dances which were to draw the Dutch and English together more than a hundred years later. In his dispatch to the Seventeen, dated August 1, 1696, Simon van der Stel says : ‘ The new hall (Kat)² having been completed in the Governor's House, the

¹ These post-office stones were slabs carved with the names of ships and usually with the notice that letters would be found beneath them. They were used by ships passing to and from the East prior to 1652,

as a means of communication, and are found from time to time.

² Said to have received its name from the Placcaaten or Edicts published from it.



TEAK DOOR IN THE CASTLE

first sermon was preached in it on the 22nd May (Whit Sunday, 1695), and regular services have been held in it ever since.'

Adjoining the Council Hall is the large reception-room, and in the rear the dining-room, which still retains a good fireplace, over which hangs a picture to which a sinister legend is attached. It is said that no one may remove it without calling down dire calamity on his head. It is also said that it covers the entrance to a secret passage down which a discontented ghost walks to the present Government House—and probably one story has just as much foundation as the other.

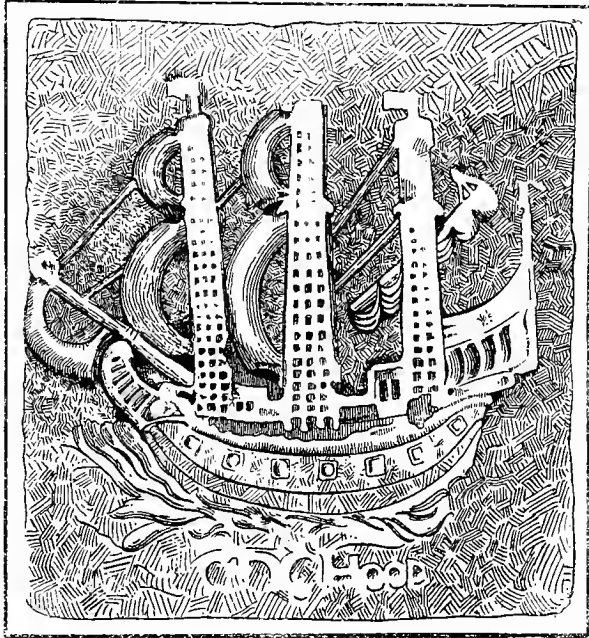
Several of the rich fanlights remain in their original positions over the chief doors, though one has, unfortunately, been removed to Groote Schuur. The little balcony, from which edicts were read and newly arrived officials presented to the burghers assembled in the square, is singularly graceful. Much of its decoration is attributed to Louis Thibault, the Lieutenant of Engineers who held the post of Government Architect towards the end of the Dutch and the early days of the English occupation.

There is one curious feature in this old Government House—the wall, fifteen feet deep, which runs through it. Passages are pierced at intervals and afford communication between the front and back rooms. The Castle has never been fully explored; perhaps further investigations may bring to light the meaning of this wall, which looks like a fortification and is buried deep in the heart of a dwelling-house. Some light is shed on the matter by a dispatch of January 23, 1696, in which Simon van der Stel writes as follows: 'The new corn stores, built on the Italian plan on the side of the cross-wall which runs through this fort, are at present so far advanced that they can already hold a large quantity of wheat, and we are doing our best to complete them.' It is probable, therefore, that this is the original fortified cross-wall which once divided the outer from the inner squares of the Castle, and that the dwelling-houses were built by Simon van der Stel above and around it. The deep passages may have been embrasures for cannon. In a letter dated July 14, 1691, to the Seventeen, he says: 'By order of Commissioner-General van Rheeде we have completed a cross-wall, masoned with stones and lime, a great strong work, and none the less necessary for our protection to cover the bastions, being 542 feet (Dutch) long, 39 feet high, 10 feet broad at the base and 8 feet in the centre and at the top 6 feet, with a stone mantelet for defence of the bastion Nassau. The foundations of the church, cellars, stores, and dwellings of the company's servants have been laid.'

The Secunde's house—to the left of the sundial—was completed

in the time of Willem Adriaan van der Stel. The court in the rear of these houses was originally divided into two squares—an arch of small bricks marks the point of division—and in the square behind the Government House was a garden surrounded by a pillared arcade. In the centre of the garden was Thibault's fountain, the church and other buildings stood in the dividing line between these two squares. The Castle well is under the sundial archway. The old pulley-wheel, by means of which the water was drawn to the surface more than two hundred years ago, is still in its place.

It was a stern age in which the old fortress was built and held—how stern we can only realize when we read the minutes of the Council of Policy and stand in the dark vaulted room beneath the Catzenellenbogen bastion. This was perhaps the torture chamber, or it may only have been a powder magazine, but a torture chamber existed—whether here or in another part of the Castle. In the Archives are records of the punishments that were meted out by order of the Company for offences that do not always sound desperate—they were terrible enough to impress the most callous. The wheel, the rack,



Ship on the seal of the Dutch East India Company, carved on a stone in the Castle

the gibbet, and the axe: we read of them again and again. And as, by a curious law, no one might be executed for an offence until he had confessed, it was customary to put him to the torture until he did. Here is an entry from the *Journal* of August 24, 1708, and there are many similar to it: 'The landrost and deputies from the Court of Justice busy this morning in the Torture Room to bring certain offenders, condemned eight days ago, ad actum proximum.'

Perhaps the thumb-screw and the rack were the terms too plain for the secretary who made the entry. Others were not so reticent.

The prison is in the same bastion, but on a level with the ramparts.

To reach it you pass up a flight of steps and close to the ship of the Dutch East India Company, deeply carved on a stone by some nameless artist of bygone days. It is strange to find it in this obscure part of the Castle. Perhaps it was the work of some prisoner with abundant leisure on his hands.

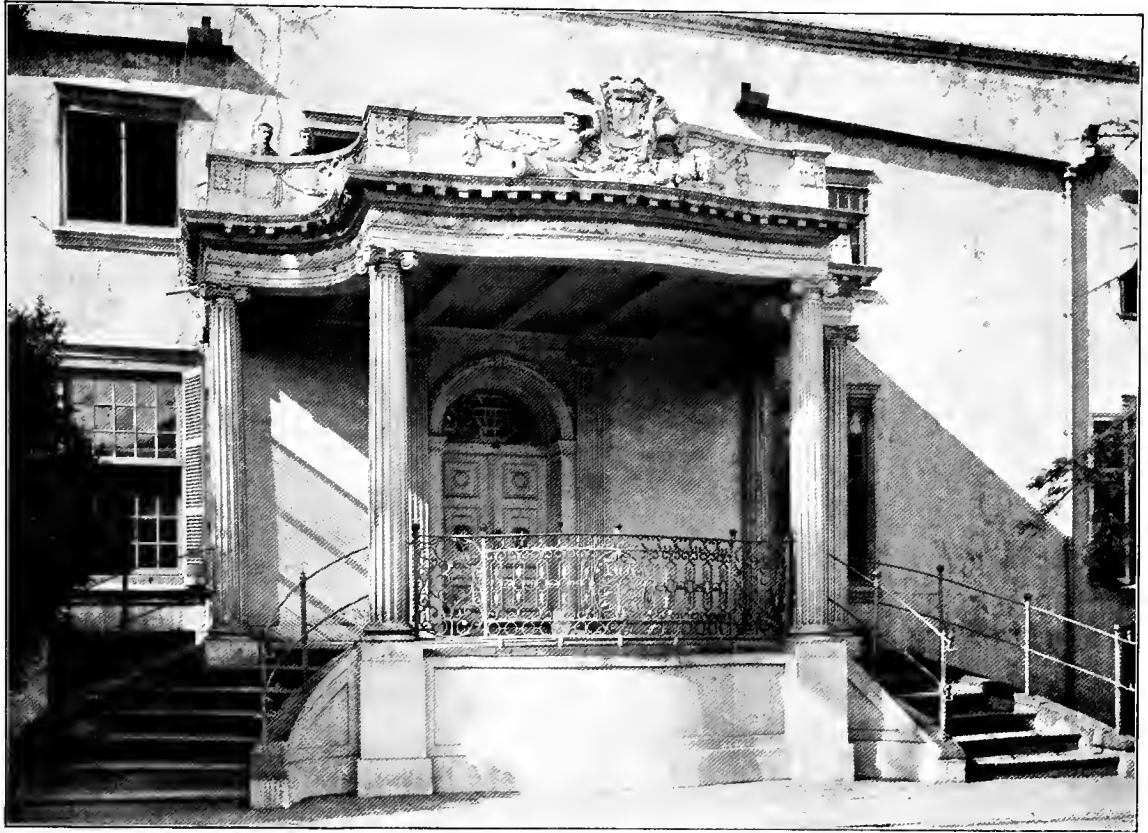
On the opposite side of the ramparts is the building which was once the Castle armoury. The arms have vanished no one knows where, but scattered over the land are various things that bear the Castle Armourer's mark. Anton Anreith, the sculptor, had a workshop in the Castle. There was a miniature Renaissance when he and Louis Thibault and the architect Schutte worked together within the Castle walls at their plans and models.

I have spoken of the small bricks which are found in some of the buildings. These are usually known as 'Klomptjes' in Holland, though at the Cape they are called Batavian bricks, and it is supposed that they were imported. A note, in the recommendations of Governor-General Hoorn to the Seventeen, dated March 11, 1710, is, however, at variance with the theory that the Cape could not produce good hard bricks. He suggests: 'That Table Bay, the Flats towards the Steenberg, Stellenbosch, and Drakenstein should be examined for the best clay for bricks, floor bricks, tiles, pots, &c. The Governor-General and Governor having inspected the potteries and tile-factories of the Company at the Cape found the articles very compact and good, and the bricks better than at Batavia.' The tile-yards were near the present Keerom Street.

We have many descriptions of the Castle from the writers who touched at the Cape on their way to and from the East. The Jesuit Père Tachard tells us how he was entertained at tea by Simon van der Stel after 'the Indian fashion', and how he walked with the Governor on the flat roof, which he speaks of as a fine terrace paved with large stones. The Embassy, of which he was a member, was on its way from France to Siam, having been sent by Louis XIV for the propagation of Christianity, and, incidentally, of trade. The Ambassador and the priests were hospitably received by Simon van der Stel in the large drawing-room adjoining the Council Hall.

The description of his visit is worth transcribing. It is taken from the English translation of 1688:

'After he had a little considered on't, it was resolved that Father Fontenay and I should go visit the Commissary-General and the Governor of the place before the rest went ashore, and that if in Discourse we found occasion to open our Design we should lay hold on it. We went strait to the Fort then without any other Recommendation. The Sentinel stopt us at the first gate, according



THE KAT



THE CASTLE GATEWAY



HOUSE IN THE IMHOFF BATTERY
Destroyed to make room for the railway



LADY ANNE BARNARD
From a miniature in the possession of
the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres



ANDREW BARNARD
From a portrait by T. Lawrence, R.A.

to the custom of Garrison places, until an Officer of the Guard being come, and having informed himself that we were come to pay a Visit to the Commissary-General and Governor, he commanded us to be let in, and gave us a Soldier to conduct us to their Apartments.

'This House consists of a large Pile of Building, two storeys high, and very solidly built. It is covered with a very fair Tarrass, paved with broad free Stone, with Balconies and Iron Rails all round ; thither they commonly go to take fresh Air. This Country has so temperate an Air that it is never very cold there, but when a South Wind blows ; and though it was in the depth of Winter then in relation to that Climate, yet it was so hot in the Day time that they were glad to go take the fresh Air in the evening.

'We went first into a great Hall where they preach every Sunday until the Church be finished that was begun to be built without the Fort. On both sides of that Hall there are pretty handsome Apartments ; they had us into that which was on the Left-hand, where we were received by Monsieur Vanderstel, and wither presently after Heer van Rheeden came to see us. He is a Man of Quality, about fifty years of age, Handsome, Civil, Wise and Learned, and who thinks and speaks well on all Subjects ; we were extremely surprised to meet with so much Politeness at the Cape of Good Hope, and much more at the Civilities and many Testimonies of Friendship which we received at that first Interview . . .

'At the same time he ordered a Summer-house that is in the Companies Garden to be made ready for us to lodge in.'

This summer-house was the portion then existing of the present Government House ; it is referred to elsewhere.

A less pleasant association is connected with Governor Pieter Gysbert Noodt—who is said to have died in his chair at the same moment on which a young student, whom, with several companions, he had unjustly sentenced to death, was hanged at the Castle on April 23, 1729. As the hangman was about to put the rope about the young man's neck, he put up his hand to check him. Turning towards the garden-house where the Governor was, he cried out, 'Governor Noodt I summon thee before the Judgement Seat of the Allseeing God, there to answer for the souls of myself and of my companions.' And the story goes that the officials, entering the house to report to the Governor that the executions had taken place, found him sitting dead in his chair.

It is more agreeable to turn to the memories of Lady Anne Barnard, wife of Andrew Barnard, the Colonial Secretary, and the author of 'Auld Robin Grey', when she reigned at the Government House in the Castle from 1797 to 1801. The Governor, Lord Macartney, preferred the Government House in the Gardens ; General Dundas, being at that time a bachelor, chose the second-sized house, and sometimes lived at Rustenburg, Rondebosch. I think that his must

have been the fine residence on the right of the entrance-court, formerly the Admiral of the Fleet's house. It still retains its charming windows and doors, and other interesting features. The Government House in the Castle must have been a very pleasant cheerful place under the hospitable rule of Lady Anne, and for a hundred years after her it was the official residence of the generals commanding the troops in South Africa, and a centre of social life, until, in the course of the Boer War, it was adapted for military offices.

In one of her letters to Lord Melville, Lady Anne writes :

' Lord Macartney, immediately on his arrival, declared his intention of living in the Government House in the Garden, which he apprehended would not be too cold in the winter, and which is certainly cooler than any other here in summer. General Dundas was the next to make his election ; he preferred remaining in the second-sized house within the Castle—being fixed there with a proper bachelor establishment—to occupying the great Government House, which required more servants and furniture, and was fitter for a family. This he gave up to us, partly from good humour and partly from the above reasons. It is a palace, containing such a suite of apartments as to make me fancy myself a princess when in it—but not an Indian or Hottentot princess, as I have fitted all up in the style of a comfortable, plain English house. Scotch carpets, English linen and rush-bottom chairs, with plenty of lolling sofas, which I have had made by regimental carpenters and stuffed by regimental tailors. In a week or two I shall invite all who wish to be merry without cards or dice, but who can talk or hop to half a dozen black fiddlers, to come and see me on my public day, which shall be once a fortnight, when the Dutch ladies (all of whom love dancing, and flirting still more) shall be kindly welcomed, and the poor ensigns and cornets shall have an opportunity of stretching their legs, as well as the generals. I shall not be stinted for room, as I have a hall of sixty feet, a drawing-room of forty, a dining-room of twenty, a tea-room of thirty, and three supper-rooms—in one of which only I shall have supper, and that cold and desultory, with sideboards and no chairs, as I wish to make my guests happy without being ruined by their drinking half a hogshead of claret every party. Ducks, chickens, &c., they shall have, but as turkeys are one pound apiece I shall not fly at any of their excellencies.

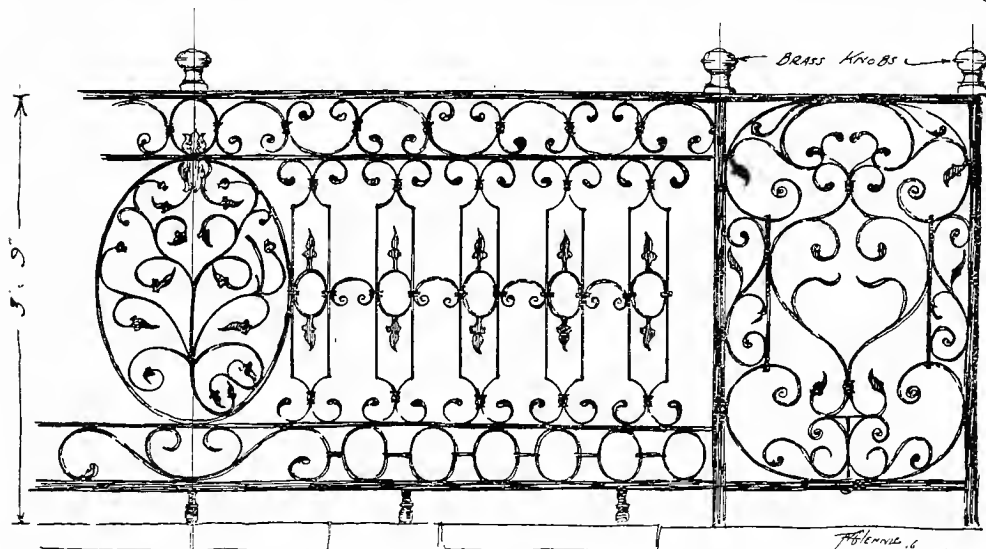
' At Rondebosch is the pleasantest country-house belonging to Government,¹ four miles from the Cape ; it has been occupied by General Campbell—Lord Macartney begged him and his wife to remain in it, which they have done. I like our house in the garrison better, however, than any we could have had elsewhere, as it is close by the office, where Mr. Barnard is from ten in the morning to three or four, and sometimes part of the evening.'

In a subsequent letter she writes of the scene in the Castle Square when the burghers arrived to take the oath of allegiance to England.

' The gates of the Castle were thrown open every morning . . . Firstly

¹ Rustenburg.

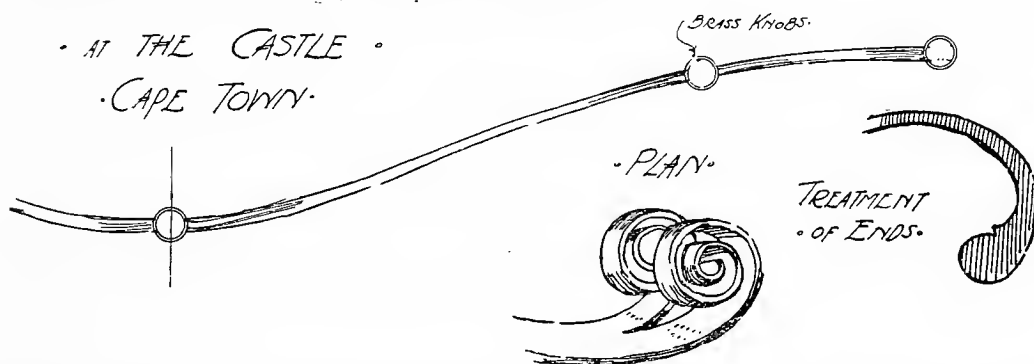
came a number of well-fed, rosy-cheeked men, with powdered hair, and dressed in black. They walked in pairs with their hats off, a regulation on entering the Castle on public occasions which, in former days, Dutch pride imposed. They were followed by the Boers from the country—farmers and settlers who had come some very great distance . . . They are very fine men, their height is



• TRUE ELEVATION & W. I. RAILING •

• AT THE CASTLE •

• CAPE TOWN •



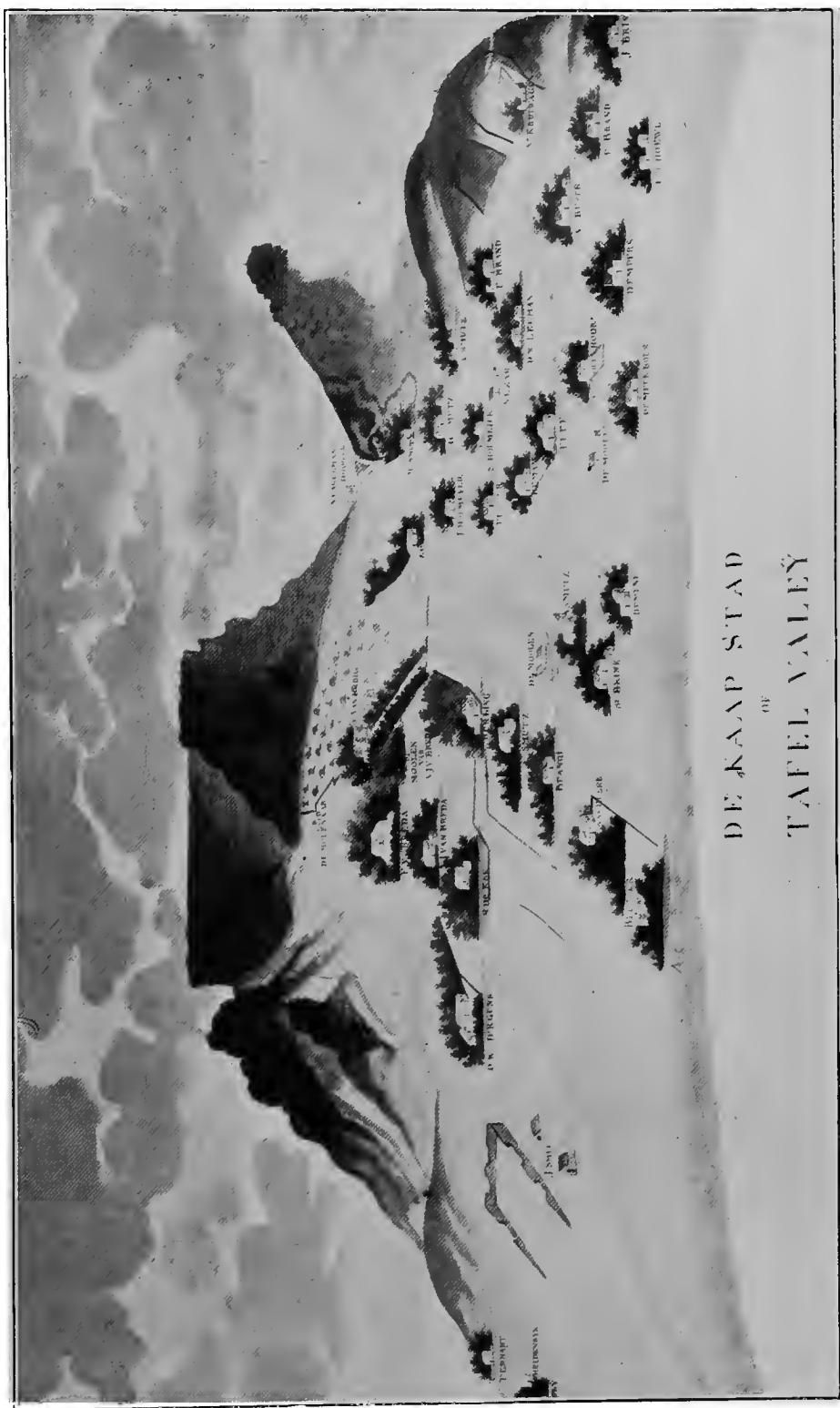
enormous ; most of them are six feet high and upwards, and I do not know how many feet across ; I hear that five or six hundred miles distant they even reach seven feet. They were dressed in blue cloth jackets and trousers and very high flat hats.'

From the balcony or Kat she received the Kafir chief, who arrived with his train of wives and dogs—' as fine a morsel of bronze as I ever saw, and there ought to have been a pair of them with candlesticks in their hands. I gave the chief a cap, which pleased him so much that,

with the gallantry of nature he came forward, and, on receiving it from the balcony in the courtyard, kissed my hand respectfully.'

Evidently Lady Anne's parties at the Castle were very successful, if we may judge from the guests' appreciation of 'three or four hams, some dozens of fowls and ducks, venison and other game, and pastry of all sorts. Our lamps, which were numerous, were lighted, and well lighted, with the tails of the sheep whose saddles we were eating.'

During recent years the Castle has been used as military offices. The spacious old reception-rooms were partitioned and the woodwork painted. The military authorities, however, under the direction of Major-General Thompson, have lately effected great improvements. Thick layers of paint have been removed from the fine old doors, the brasswork has been cleaned and repaired, the partitions taken down, and the rooms restored to something of their original beauty, though much still remains to be done.



LATE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY PRINT OF TABLE VALLEY



RHEEZICHT



LEEUWENH

IV

IN TABLE VALLEY

UP and up and still upward. Through the old garden of the Dutch East India Company, past the Mount Nelson Hotel, and on to the very top of Hof Street, where a turn to the right brings you to all that remains of an ancient gateway—one massive pier. Another turn—to the left—takes you into an oak avenue and so to Leeuwenhof, at the foot of Table Mountain.

High above the rattle and clang of modern Cape Town stands the great house of Johannes Blesius, fiscal or magistrate in the time of the van der Stels; but the house is probably older than even those early days, for in the grant made to Blesius in 1698 a building is clearly shown in its present position. The land had previously been occupied by the burgher Guillaume Heems—by whom, presumably, this house was built—and was transferred to Blesius when Heems became the owner of Boscheuval, now Bishops court, the farm laid out some forty-five years earlier by van Riebeeck.

So Leeuwenhof links us to the very earliest days of the Cape's history. In its prime it was perhaps the greatest house in Table Valley. Willem Adriaan van der Stel writes of it as being 'infinitely larger and finer' than his Vergelegen—it must have been about twice as large—and even to-day it is a very fine house indeed. Latrobe, writing of it in 1815, when it was the residence of Johannes Zorn, says, 'It is a good Dutch building, delightfully situated among shady groves of various trees. The garden abounds with a vast variety of large flowering shrubs and plants. The portico or gallery, running along the whole front of the building, has an espalier roof entirely covered with vines, the grapes hanging down in great profusion and beauty.' These fine gardens have been encroached upon in recent years by the growth of modern Cape Town, but sufficient space remains to set the old house well apart from the newer ones that press upon it. Burchell, writing in 1810, speaks of the beautiful trees of *Oleander* and *Cassia corymbosa* in the garden and says that the house was 'delightfully placed in the midst of gardens and plantations, in the country behind the town'.

The woodwork throughout is of teak which has weathered the

stress and strain of over two hundred years. There is a carved teak staircase, with open-work which suggests Chinese influence—the work perhaps of some of the clever Eastern slaves who fetched prices proportionate to their capacity for carving and masonwork. The great windows are unspoiled, and their innumerable panes of glass have attained a lovely iridescence, dyeing the white curtains within to the tint of a laughing-dove's neck. The wide hall which runs the full length of the house is still paved with its old red tiles, the steps leading to the stoep are still edged with the little bricks that tradition says were brought from Batavia in the early days of the Cape.

The house is built with a solidity which we seldom see in these days of jerry-building and scamping. Stately Leeuwenhof is one of those square, flat-roofed houses which came into being at the close of the seventeenth and the early part of the eighteenth century, when the fires which visited old Cape Town rendered the thatched roofs dangerous. These flat cemented roofs are, however, very liable to shrink and crack in the summer heat, thus affording ingress for the winter rains. Where the cracks are not repaired the houses fall into decay.

I have touched on this point because I wish that all South Africa would feel a pride in the fine old houses which have come down to her from bygone generations. The weight of public opinion should make it impossible for the owners to let them deteriorate, and, equally, it should discourage the so-called improvements to windows, doors, floors, and roofs by which many of these houses are being disfigured—sometimes by new-comers, but more often by the descendants of the men who built them with infinite care and knowledge.

Once upon a time Leeuwenhof stood in a wide expanse of rich land—the good alluvial soil of Table Valley which grows the finest grapes and stephanotis in the world, and a little knowledge and expenditure will go far in restoring what is left of the garden to its old-time loveliness. In this favoured corner the south-easter is only a breeze, cooling the air without stripping the leaves from the branches as it is apt to do in less sheltered places.

A fine feature of the house is its wide, pillared stoep, while the dentated ornamentation round the walls is a common form of classical decoration. Johannes Zorn, who owned it a hundred years ago, was Landdrost of the Cape district, and the old house was probably a great centre of social life then, as it had been a century earlier, in the days of Fiscal Blesius.



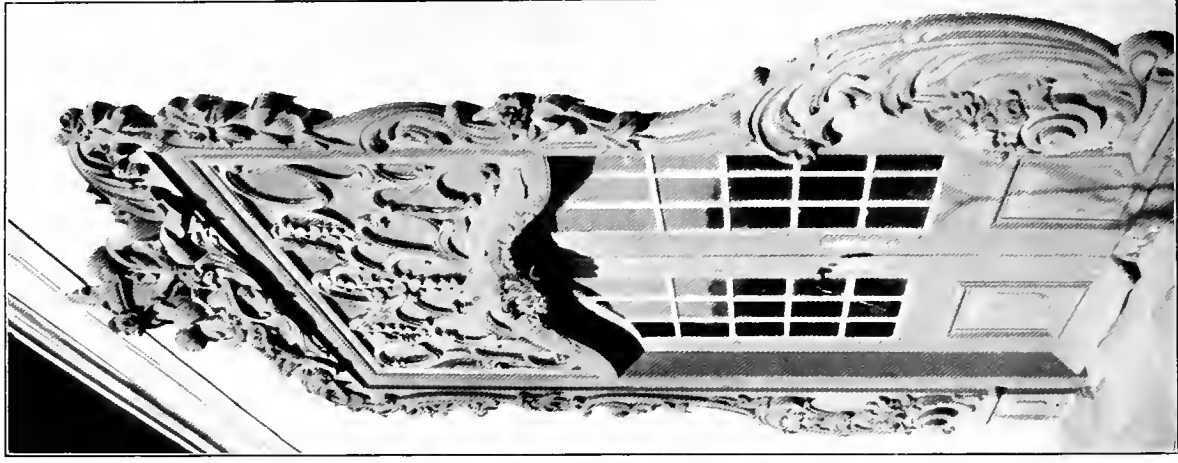
OLD DUTCH PUMP



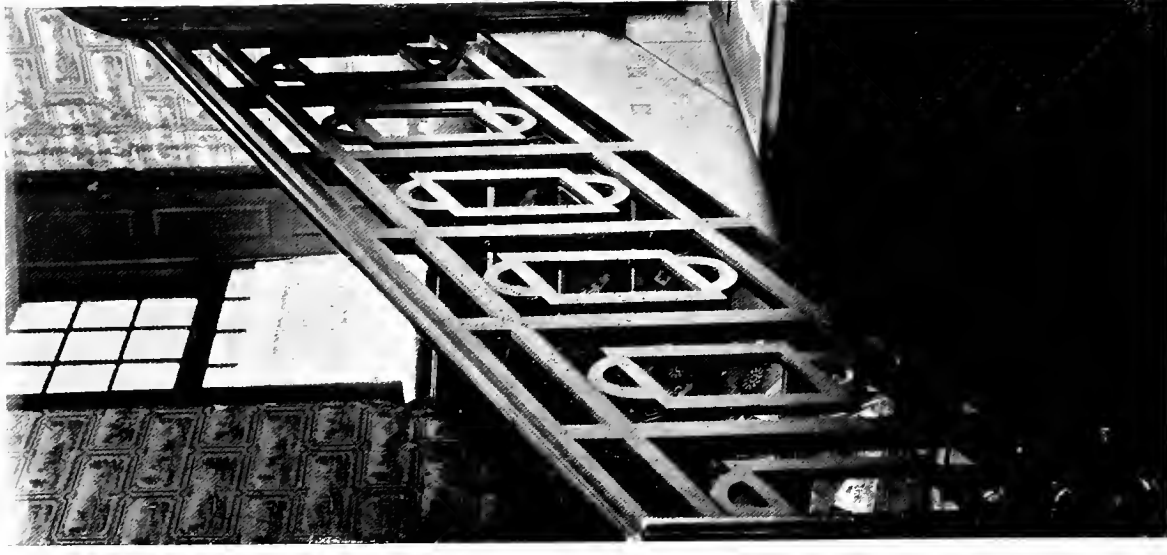
COACH-HOUSE OF SAASVELD HOUSE



DOOR AND WINDOW AT THE NORMAL COLLEGE



STAIRCASE AT LEEUWENHOF



To turn from the house to the people who lived in it, Guillaume Heems and his wife came to the Cape in 1696 from Bruges. In common with many others he has no claim to posthumous fame except as the owner of his house and, in this case, as one of the signatories to the petition in favour of the younger van der Stel. He was, moreover, one of those who testified to the Governor's fairness and impartiality in regard to the sale of vegetables when examined before the commission in 1705. In 1698 Leeuwenhof passed into the possession of the Fiscal Johannes Blesius. Blesius had married Christina Diemer in 1685, and they had five children, the two younger of whom bore the romantic names of Dominicus and Deliana. The eldest daughter, Christina, married Jacobus Cruse, a member of the Council of Policy in the time of the younger van der Stel. Amongst the hatchments which were thrown aside some years ago, when the Dutch Reformed Church in the Heerengracht was altered from a fine gabled building into the present edifice and the tombs of the old governors and worthies were scattered to the dust, was one bearing the name of Joan Blesius and the date 1771. It was rescued some years later by the Rev. H. C. V. Leibbrandt, then Keeper of the Archives.

It must have been a fair garden in which Dominicus and Deliana played 'derde mannetje' and the other childish games that, under various names, are as old as this old world. Deliana grew up to marry Cornelis van Beaumont and to call her eldest daughter Catharina Balthazarina, after the sonorous Dutch fashion. After his death she married Leonardus Weijer of Amsterdam. Her thoughts must often have crossed the seas to the house set amongst its vines and roses in the heart of Table Valley, to the great wall of Table Mountain rising sheer behind it, and to the blue waters of the bay below. To-day the chief glory of Leeuwenhof is a glowing mass of orange *Bignonia venusta* and a copper-coloured *Bougainvillea* which flings long shoots across the pillared stoep and affords grateful shade from the morning sun. Leeuwenhof has recently been bought by Mr. Lewis.

A lesser neighbour of Leeuwenhof is Waterhof. Equally blessed in soil and situation, it had a glorious garden not long ago—a garden in which steps of Batavian bricks led you from one terrace to another, in which you lost yourself in the luxuriant tangle of honeysuckle, myrtle, jasmine, and scarlet passion-flower. Even to-day, when the old place has been encroached upon by the modern builder and shorn of much of its beauty, the great Cape chestnut (*Calodendrum capense*) is a landmark from far off when its purple blossoms cover

the branches more thickly than do the leaves and the petals fall in a benison on the old house below.

It was a Hofmeyr house once, and the legend which hangs about so many old Cape houses has a home at Waterhof. The household slaves mutinied on one occasion, with the amiable intention of murdering every member of the family. With a thoroughness worthy of a better cause they proceeded to carry out their intention; but a young slave girl had charge of the sleeping baby, and when all her fellows were running amok and yelling in triumph she slipped outside with her precious charge and slid him into the brick baking-oven in the yard. Then she ran about and yelled and hooted and danced a fandango with every one else, though her faithful heart must have beaten quickly with fear that the child would wake and add his voice to the chorus. But he slept through it all, as a healthy baby would, and lived to hand the story down to his children's children.

Waterhof is a place wherein to see visions and dream dreams. Legend says that you may hear the pattering footsteps of the mutinous slaves whenever you care to listen for them. The hand of time has rested heavily on the old house but it retains some of its interesting features.¹ In an old print of Table Valley it is marked 'J. Hofmeyer'. Below it is Welgemeende, originally granted to Andries de Man, appointed Secunde in 1684, and marked 'S. Hofmeier'—they were not bound by any hard and fast conventions of spelling a hundred years ago. It has belonged to the Hofmeyrs for many generations.

Near Leeuwenhof are several old Smuts houses—the Roman-Dutch law of inheritance, by which estates were cut up and divided between the heirs, explains the close proximity in which relatives often lived. Leeuwendal was built on land granted to Hendrik Smuts in 1777, and its neighbour Bellevue was the homestead of Michiel Smuts. The first member of this family to come to South Africa was an earlier Michiel Smuts, a native of Middelburg in Zeeland, who arrived at the Cape in 1692, and from whom General Smuts is descended.

The ground upon which the Mount Nelson Hotel now stands was part of the van Oudtshoorn estate, which extended from Hof Street to Kloof Street, where beautiful Saasveld House was built by Baron Willem Ferdinand van Oudtshoorn, son of the Governor who died on board a ship in Table Bay in 1773, on his way to take up his office. He was buried in the Groote Kerk in Cape Town and his tombstone was taken down with those of all the other Governors

¹ Since this was written Waterhof has been bought by Mrs. Woodhead and restored.

who had died at the Cape when the church was rebuilt. It has recently been found lying in the churchyard and is now built into the wall. Saasveld House has been bought by the Dutch Reformed Church and has been enlarged as a boarding-school, at the expense of much of its former beauty.

On the opposite side of Table Valley are houses which belonged to the van Breda family. For more than a century and a half Oranjestad was the family homestead, and near by is Rheezicht where Alexander van Breda built his house in 1782.

Close to Rheezicht is all that a fire has left to us of Nooitgedacht of the Gardens. There are many Nooitgedachts. The old Dutchman did not hesitate over the choice of a name for his new house simply because some one had chosen the same name before him. What did it matter, when there was no postman to be puzzled? So the land was filled with Welgelegens and Goede Hoops and Nooitgedachts, each with its significance of beauty or hope or delight.

Nooitgedacht—the Unexpected. Sometimes the name has a prosaic origin, merely expressive of surprise at an unlooked-for heritage or grant, as in Nooitgedacht of Stellenbosch. But when Johannes Ossenbui, to whom this land above Cape Town was granted in 1708, looked on the loveliness of its setting between sea and mountain, perhaps surprise and admiration blended in the name that rose to his lips. The property has passed through many hands since those early days, and in 1820 came into the possession of Josua Andries Joubert, who is credited with the building of the present house; but, as a print of the end of the eighteenth century shows a similar house on the site, it is probable that he only added to the original building.

There are indications which point to Thibault as the architect of the house which stands on the site of Ossenbui's homestead. A glance at the graceful curves and dentated ornament of the oval room at the entrance to the old Slave Lodge—added by Thibault—reveals a strong resemblance to the great entrance hall of Nooitgedacht. Externally and in the mouldings of the doors and windows the type is what is called Georgian—though we cannot assign to England alone an architectural style which was common to many European countries at the close of the eighteenth century.

The earlier homestead, which was apparently the nucleus of the present house, was single-storeyed, and to it may have belonged the fine old blue flags which pave the steps and high stoep and the large red tiles in the ruined portion of the building. For a fire, set alight by sparks from a mountain conflagration a few years ago,

destroyed the back of the building and the fine old dining hall. This had been a long room with a semi-circular end and teak doors, curved to follow the bend of the wall. At the end nearest to the doors leading to the entrance hall stood two carved wooden figures, probably the work of Anreith, and at the other end was a small raised platform for musicians.

There was a ballroom on the upper floor, for Nooitgedacht was a great centre of hospitality in the days when the Dutch Reformed Church looked leniently on minuets and gavottes, and ladies with powdered hair and men with queues and embroidered satin suits were carried to the old homestead in sedan chairs, to disport themselves within while their slaves gossipped of their affairs outside.

To-day the formal terraced garden of Nooitgedacht is a ruin, and the walls of the oak-shaded well have been broken down, but these are matters which the new owners, the All Saints Sisters, will repair. Of greater moment are the cool oak avenues that surround the house, the tangle of passion-flowers that hangs tenderly about the ruined tomb in the garden and the tall shafts of cypress through which you look down on the blue sea from the curved arches of the stoep.

Nooitgedacht owns a legend similar to that of Waterhof, a tale of mutinous slaves and of the master and mistress returning from a rout at Government House—she in brocade and diamonds, he in powder and satin—to be murdered on their arrival. Again, only the baby was saved and by its faithful slave-nurse, who hid in a dark cupboard, clasping the child to her in silence while her fellow-slaves prodded the darkness with knives tied to long bamboos, piercing her feet again and again. It is stories such as these which shed a strong sidelight on the relations between the slaves and their owners. There are many records in the Archives of amok-running on the part of the Malays—a name applied in the first instance to the slaves or prisoners who were brought from the East Indies, but now used somewhat loosely to describe any Cape Moslem. There are also stories of devotion on the part of the slaves and kindness on that of the masters, the Dinahs and Lenas, the Aprils and Cupidos, becoming identified with the family in a manner which is best understood by its analogy in the southern American states. The Dutch huisvrouw trained her slaves well, and the result still lingers at the Cape, where the coloured folk of the old school are excellent cooks and coachmen and laundresses.

In passing, it must be noted that strangers often hold the erroneous theory that every coloured person at the Cape is a half-caste, or has some proportion of European blood. A glance at the old records



OLD RESIDENCE IN ROELAND STREET
Now the Normal College. Occupied by Willem Boers in 1777



THE OLD HOUSE OF GROOTE SCHUUR



THE HOUSE OF GROOTE SCHUUR TO-DAY

will show that while some slaves came from Mozambique the greater number were brought from the East Indies, India, or Ceylon, and their descendants of to-day are not necessarily of mixed descent. Both Indian and Malay types are to be seen in their original purity, though of course there are many others amongst the coloured people whose features indicate European or African blood.

To return to the old houses of Table Valley—it will be noticed that most of them are of the square classical type, built after the fires which ravaged the early settlement. Many of them were surmounted by decorative urns and other devices, which in an earthquake a little over a century ago came crashing down into the streets. Unlike the gabled houses of the country districts they have but rarely served as an inspiration to modern architects, while gables have been used in every possible position—no modern villa being considered complete unless it is adorned by one, at least, and that not always of a graceful or harmonious outline. In fact, South Africa is fast becoming over-gabled, and the eye turns with relief to the plain grave simplicity and dignity of houses such as Leeuwenhof.

Another very fine residence was the house which to-day is the Normal College. In 1777 it was the property of Willem Cornelis Boers, and during another period of the eighteenth century Johannes Blesser, an official in the Company's service, lived there.

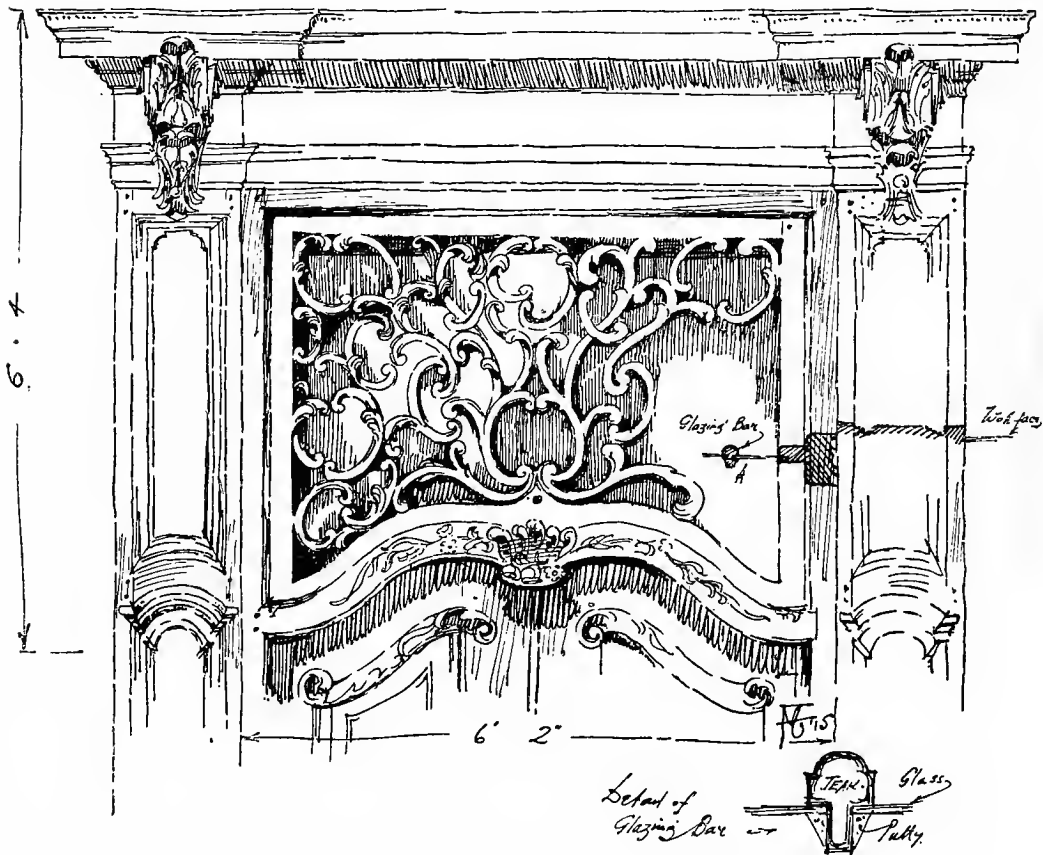
The old burghers who built their homes above the town looked out on a wonderful view. Table Bay lay at their feet and across it were the Blaauwberg, Koeberg, and Tygerberg hills, where the setting sun gleamed on the white walls of de Grendel, granted in the early days to Booy Booyesen and now the thriving farm of Sir David Graaff. Close by is the homestead of Platte Kloof where lived Abbetje Meyboom who married Rudolf Alleman, as readers of the van Riebeeck Society's latest publication will remember. The Meybooms were prosperous folk, and in 1708 Claas Meyboom was granted the whole of the upper side of Greenmarket Square, where probably he built his town house.

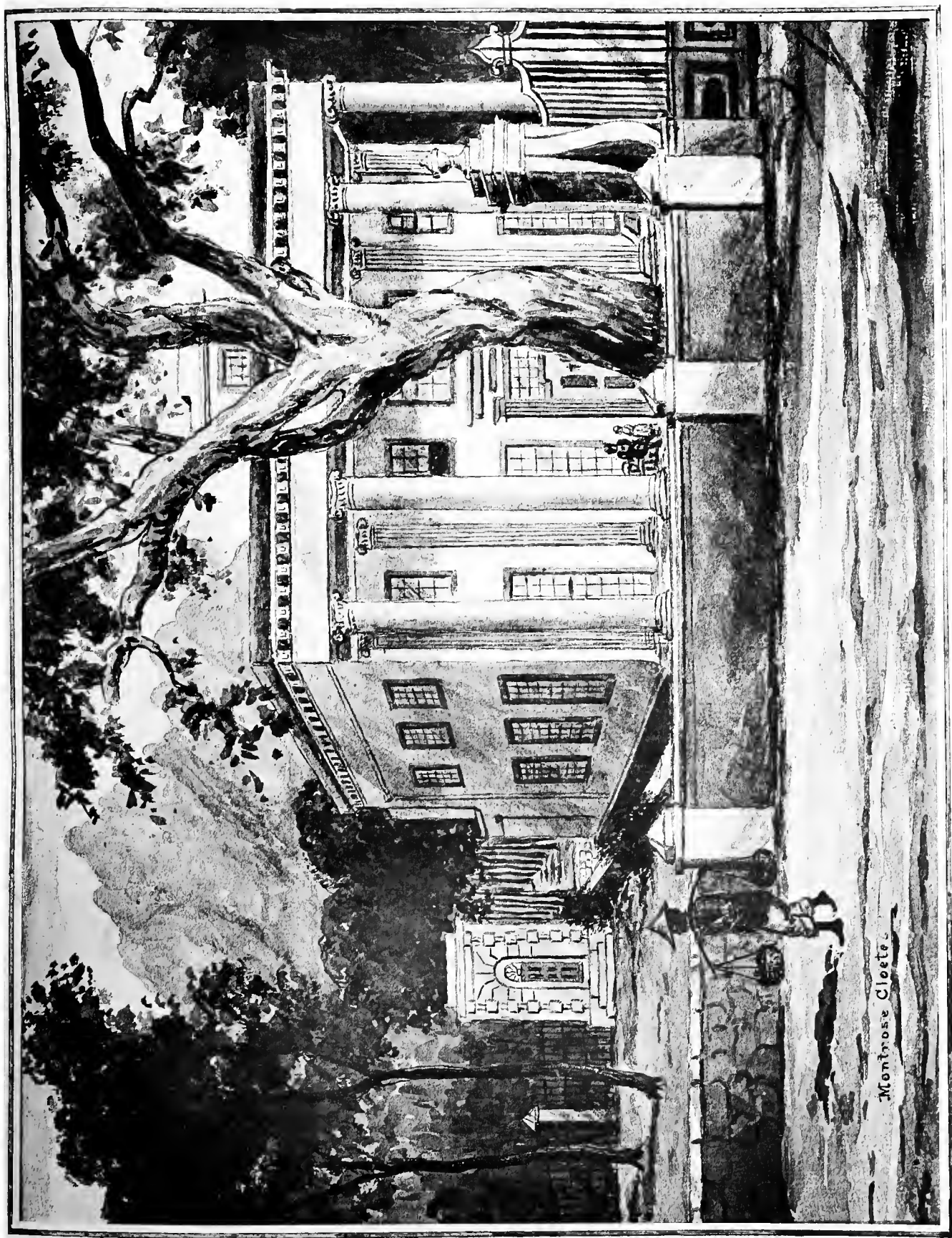
Behind the houses of Cape Town rose the sheer wall of the mountain, and beyond the hills across the bay gleamed the peaks of the Drakenstein, snow-touched in the winter. Over the Kloof Nek is Camps Bay, where there was only one house a century ago. The original owner was Christian Otto von Camptz, and the house was called Ravensteijn. It came to him through his marriage with Anna Koekemoer in 1778 and in 1786 he sold it to the Company.¹

¹ It was in this house, now known as the Homestead, that Laurence Oliphant was born in 1829.

Latrobe tells us of his ride over the Nek to the Round House in 1815. 'Turning to the right, round the Lion's Head, we arrived at a villa belonging to Mr. Horak. This place, given to him by the Earl of Caledon, has been greatly improved by clothing the steep ascents with plantations of Witteboom [the silver-tree] and other trees. The gardens surround the circular mansion in concentric circles. Behind the house stone steps lead to a picturesque group of rocks.' This, by the way, together with the actual grant to Horak in 1814, disposes of the romance which assigns the building of the Round House to Lord Charles Somerset. Latrobe continued his ride, past Clifton to Botany Bay, where a small botanic garden had been laid out by Dr. Liesching and Mr. Ziegler.

FAYLIGHT -- NORMAL COLLEGE -- CAPE TOWN.





RUSTENBURG, RONDEBOSCH

Drawn by Montrose Cloete from an old sketch

V

BEHIND TABLE MOUNTAIN

IT is a long line of prosperous suburbs to-day, houses thickly clustered along the route of the tram and train by which thousands of people pour into the Mother City of South Africa each morning and return each evening. The larger houses lie in correspondingly larger gardens, half hidden beneath the great oaks which are a legacy from the past. Peaceful and sheltered, secure in the guardianship of law and order, they sleep undisturbed in the shadow of Table Mountain, the great rock that keeps watch and ward at the gate of South Africa.

It is difficult to shut our eyes to the present and reconstruct the scene that opened before Jan van Riebeeck's sight when, in 1652, he rode over the shoulder of the mountain in search of good corn land—the heavy south-easters having blown the corn out of the ear in the neighbourhood of the settlement and flattened it on the Green Point Common. He felt great delight at seeing the rich earth near the 'Rondeboschen', and it is pleasant to read of his jubilation when the small experimental farm at Groote Schuur thrived and the wheat and barley came to fruition. The seed was sown in the face of danger, for a large tribe of Hottentots was encamped in the neighbourhood; but the little commander ploughed the land, built a fort of sods to protect the workers, and committed the new venture to the care of the Providence in which he had such a robust faith.

Groote Schuur remained a Government farm until 1791, when, in order to raise funds, it was sold by the Company to Hendrik Christiaan Herhold, the purchase price being 53,000 gulden.

Of the Groote Schuur of to-day much has been written and much may yet be written before justice is done to its exquisite charm. Every one who knows the Cape has seen the fine white-gabled house with its roof of dull red tiles, its wide stoep and teak-panelled rooms filled with old furniture and china. Its history has been told very often. How it passed from the Herhold family to Willem van Ryneveld, Fiscal and Member of the Council of Policy under the successive Dutch and English Governments, who planted many of the finest trees on the estate. How, after his death, it was bought

by George Anosi and sold by him in 1832 to Mr. Abraham de Smidt. How, for a short time, it belonged to Mrs. John van der Byl, from whom it was bought by Cecil Rhodes for whom Mr. Herbert Baker rebuilt the old house. This building was destroyed by fire, and again rebuilt by Mr. Baker. All these things are solid and useful facts. But when we stand on the stoep behind Groote Schuur and look out across the blur of colour under the stone pines in the garden—cannas, bougainvillea, and plumbago—across the soft turquoise of the hydrangeas on the hillside and up the silver-clad slopes of the grey mountain, we are only conscious of the two great spirits of the past—the two pioneers—Jan van Riebeeck and Cecil Rhodes. As long as this South Africa of ours endures their names will be linked together in this lovely spot—the corn lands of the one, the home of the other. Even the house reflects the work of both, for underneath the building—the fourth erected on this site—are the foundations of the great barn in which van Riebeeck stored his grain, found by Mr. Herbert Baker in making the necessary excavations. When van Ryneveld bought the property it included ‘De Onder Schuur’, now the Governor-General’s country house of Westbrooke, and part of Kleine Schuur, the other part having been sold to Christoffel Coenraad Prediger in 1795. On the title deeds may be seen the wide avenue now known as Newlands Avenue, which ran through this property.

One of the houses most closely linked with the history of South Africa is Rustenburg at Rondebosch, now a school for girls. Kolbe, writing more than two hundred years ago, calls it ‘a noble Pleasure House for the Governour, and near it a beautiful grove of oaks, called the Round-Bush, from which the Garden takes its name’.¹ In the *Nieuwste Beschrijving* it is called ‘a beautiful country house’, and it is referred to by Stavorinus and other writers, great commendation being given to its gardens and plantations. It was here that the first capitulation of the Cape was signed in 1796, and during the first English occupation it was sometimes the residence of General Dundas. Rustenburg was partly destroyed by fire during the last century, but owing to its flat roof escaped the total destruction which fell upon the early Cloete homestead of Ecklenberg on the same day, when a violent wind carried the burning thatch from house to house.

Above Groote Schuur lie the ruins of the old house of Mount Pleasant, on land granted to Pieter Laurens Cloete in 1811. It was a fine homestead with a magnificent view, and was famed for its hospitality in the early days of the English occupation; but to-day the little

¹ The name Rondebosch—originally Riebeeck, who found there a round grove of wild thorny trees. Ronde Doorn Bossien—was given by van



CECIL RHODES'S LIBRARY



THE BACK STOEP



THE ENTRANCE HALL
GROOTE SCHUUR

grey squirrels which Cecil Rhodes brought to the Cape frisk in and out of the ruins and trees grow and thrive in what was the dining hall. For this homestead, like many others, fell a victim to fire, and its beauty is turned to ashes and the spirit of feasting to desolation.

In Newlands Avenue, behind the present house of Montebello, near where Ohlsson's brewery stands and where a brewery has stood since the Cape's earliest days, was Papenboom. Here, in the time of the van der Stels, the Widow Mensinck (a niece of Henning Huysing's wife and a sister of Adam Tas) and her son brewed beer and apparently made themselves as unpleasant to those in authority as did the more distinguished members of the family. It is difficult to follow all the windings of these two-hundred-years old quarrels, but the gist appears to be that Mrs. Mensinck, having obtained the brewing rights from Simon van der Stel, refused to supply the lessee Cruywagen with good beer, refused to pay for the boilers supplied by the Company, banged the door in the faces of Mrs. Cruywagen and the Court Messenger, used, says the old record, 'many irrelevant and aggravating expressions'—a delicate euphuism, this—and displayed, generally, 'un-alloyed, obstinate malice.' I do not know what the end of the quarrel was nor does it matter—Mrs. Mensinck is only interesting as casting a sidelight on the characteristics which distinguished the families of Huysing and Tas in those far-off troubled days. On the departure of the Mensincks the land was given to Rudolph Steenbok in 1716, and towards the close of the eighteenth century the beautiful house of Papenboom, afterwards destroyed by fire, was built by Thibault for the van Reenen family. It was sometimes called The Brewery. On the opposite side of Newlands Avenue lies Newlands House, a country residence of the Dutch governors until 1791, when it was sold from motives of economy to Mr. Hendrik de Vos. In the early English days it belonged to Mr. William Duckitt, from whom Sir John Cradock purchased it once more for a Government House. Lord Charles Somerset attempted to add a second story to the building, with the result that the roof fell in during a storm on a night in August 1819, the walls not being strong enough to support the additional weight. In 1828 the English Government, dismayed at the extravagance of the Somerset administration, and considering the Governor over-housed with Government House and Newlands House, in addition to shooting boxes at Worcester and Groote Post, gave orders for the sale of all except Government House. Newlands House, upon which nearly £30,000 had been spent, was sold for a tenth of that sum. It now belongs to Mr. Hiddingh. The gardens at Newlands are referred to by very early travellers as serving principally for the

supply of vegetables to the Company's ships ; but Bougainville, who visited them in 1769, found them more beautiful than the gardens in the town. The long alleys sheltered by hedges higher than himself gave them, he said, the appearance of a monastery garden. He planted some oaks, but no one knows to-day which these are among the giant trees that shade the house. The Abbé de la Caille writes of being taken by Ryk Tulbagh in 1751 to see the garden of Newlands with the ' pleasure house ' which he had built in the previous year ; men were at work on making the garden ' one of the most beautiful in the neighbourhood '. Stavorinus tells us that in 1768 he saw there an apricot tree so large that more than twenty men could be sheltered under its branches, which bore excellent fruit. The best account of the house, however, is that given by Las Cases, Napoleon's secretary, the author of the famous *Mémorial de Ste.-Hélène*. He was expelled from St. Helena by Sir Hudson Lowe for infringing regulations and was sent first to the Cape and subsequently to Europe. Newlands House was lent to him for three months by Lord Charles Somerset, then Governor. At first he and his son had been lodged in the Castle.

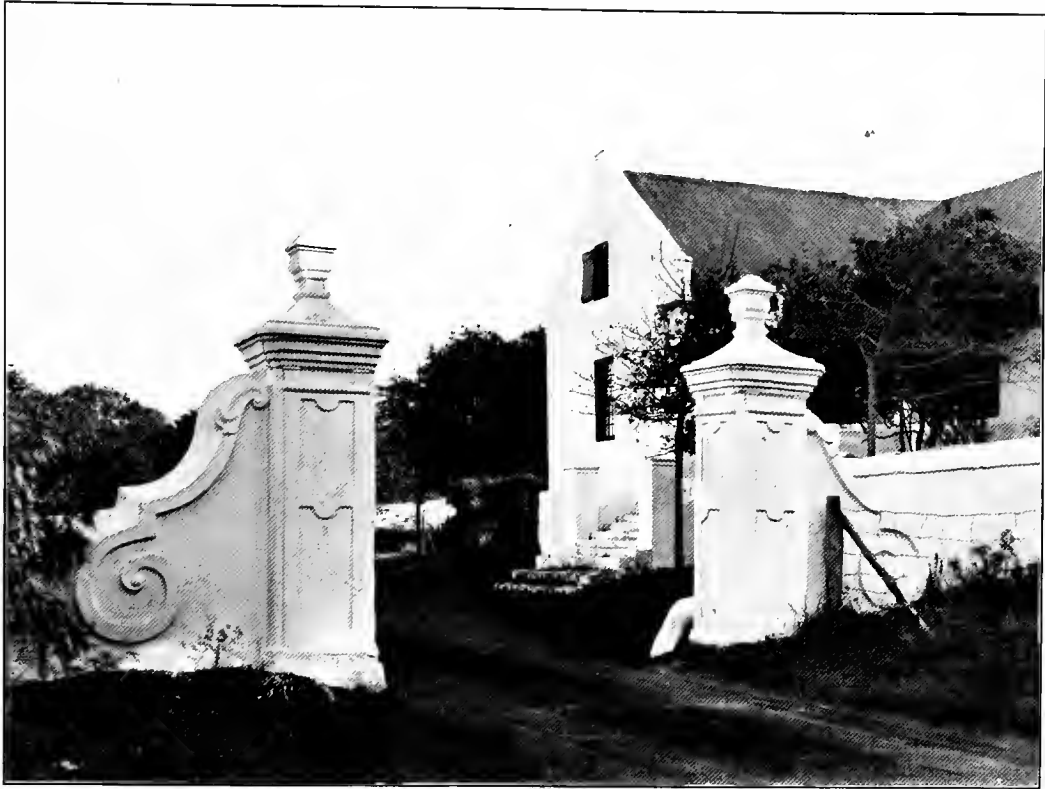
' It might be accounted a pleasant residence even in Europe . . . it was surrounded by lofty trees and thick groves,' he says. ' When left to ourselves in this delightful place, we felt that we had been suddenly removed from a prison to a Paradise. The elegantly furnished apartments, the dovecots in the vicinity of the house, the birds of every kind that inhabited the grounds, the numerous flower-beds, groves, and delightful walks, and the silence and solitude that prevailed—all presented a somewhat magical effect and reminded us of Zémire and Azor.'

From the pen of Las Cases we have a picture of Dr. Barry, the famous woman doctor, who masqueraded as a man all her life. On his first introduction, he says :

' I mistook the captain's medical friend for his son or nephew. The grave Doctor, who was presented to me, was a boy of eighteen, with the form, the manners, and the voice of a woman. But Dr. Barry (such was his name) was described to be an absolute phenomenon. I was informed that he had obtained his diploma at the age of thirteen, after the most rigorous examination ; that he had performed extraordinary cures at the Cape, and had saved the life of one of the Governor's daughters, after she had been given up, which rendered him a sort of favourite in the family.'

On another occasion he mentions that the young doctor had been driven to the Castle by the two Miss Somersets in their carriage.

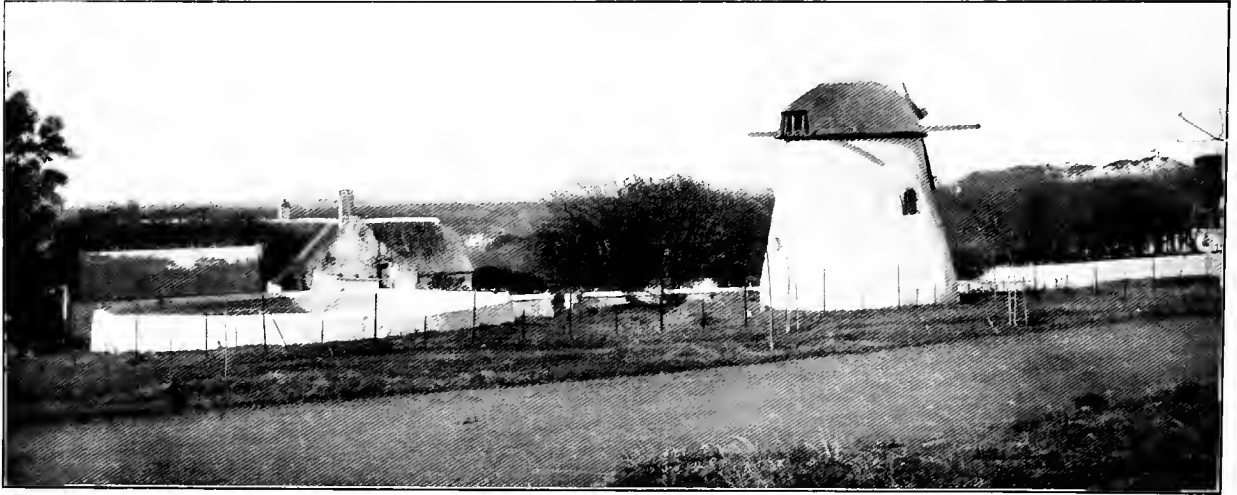
Eventually, on Newlands House being required for the use of Lord Amhurst, on his way from China, Las Cases and his son were lodged at a farm in the Tygerberg called Altydgedacht.



GATEWAY AT WELGELEGEN



GATEWAY AT BOSHOFF



OLD DUTCH MILL, WELGELEGEN



AN OLD STABLE AT GROOTE SCHUUR

Newlands is now the residence of the well-known painter, Mr. Gwelo Goodman. In the grounds is the tomb of a learned Dutch divine, van Lier, who died towards the end of the eighteenth century.

Hidden in the woods above the end of Newlands Avenue are the ruins of the little house of Paradise, to which Lady Anne and her Mr. Barnard used to repair for peaceful week-ends, far from the noise and bustle and gossip of the Castle. The name of Paradise was given to the ravine in the neighbourhood, whence native timber could be brought with ease for the Company's use, whereas the ravine of Kirstenbosch, being more inaccessible, was known as Hell—a somewhat illogical reason. Lady Anne's cottage is hopelessly derelict to-day, but the ground-plan of the house is easily traced and you may still stand on her stoep and mark that it once had curved white seats at the corners. The way to it is hidden under trees; it is as mysterious and secret as the palace of the Sleeping Beauty. Her wide view is lost in leafy shade, but her 'hasty little brook' still babbles past the ruined homestead.¹

At the end of Newlands Avenue was the old house of the van Breda's—'Boshof'. It is one of the many once-beautiful houses from which the glory has departed, and a warning to care for those that yet remain. The fine old gates of Boshof are left to us, and at the time of writing there still lingers an outbuilding with a graceful gable.

Across the Liesbeek River lies the Archbishop's residence of Bishops court, once van Riebeeck's farm of Boscheuval. The latter has left us a record of the trees he planted, some of which remain to this day. There were '1,244 fruit-trees, independent of the lands sown, and some thousands of young vines of fair growth'. His hedge of 'bitter wild almonds' may still be traced, cutting across the hill from Kirstenbosch towards Wynberg—it was clearly a fine and prosperous farm when he left it in 1661. In the Record Office is a grant of Boscheuval to 'the free-burgher Tobias Marquard', dated 1695, and in the days of the van der Stels it belonged to the Burgher Guillaume Heems.

If you stand in the lovely garden of Bishops court to-day and look up at the house you will notice the traces of an earlier homestead—a doorway here, a small-paned window there, but it is not likely that much remains of the house which van Riebeeck mentions as being on the land. The windows may be those of Guillaume Heems's house, but this is pure speculation. The oaks perhaps at least we may ascribe to van Riebeeck, and in their shade grow the *Wichuriana* roses of to-day.

¹ The Barnards afterwards lived at the Vineyard, then a low, thatched bungalow.

Nearer the mountain than Bishopscourt is Kirstenbosch, a Company's military outpost from the earliest days to the British occupation. At that time the lower portion of the land was granted to the Colonial Secretary, Mr. Alexander, and the upper portion to Colonel Christopher Bird. On the ground belonging to the latter is an exquisite little sunken bath, ovoid, lined with tiny Batavian bricks and sheltered from the sun by lofty trees. This was the swimming bath of the daughters of the house when it was owned by the Eksteens in the early days of last century, and slave girls sat in a circle on the shady bank above to keep away intruders. To-day I like to think that when night falls on Kirstenbosch, Pan and the dryads creep from the leafy mountain glens and bathe in the cool, moon-lit water. The Kirstenbosch homesteads are in ruins, but around the ruins and in the deep mountain ravines the Botanic Gardens of South Africa will guard for future ages the trees and flowers which are the glory of the whole earth and not of one province of the Union only.

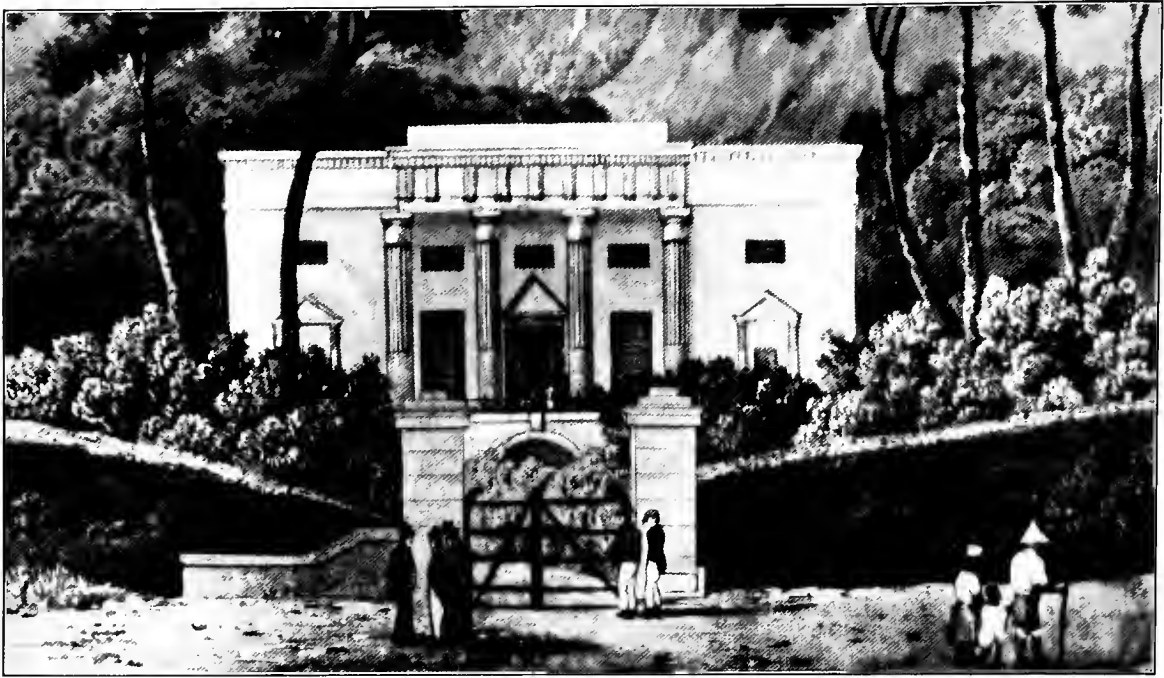
Klassenbosch lies near by, an old farm of which one portion was granted to Hendrik ten Damme in 1696, and beyond is the rich and smiling valley of Constantia.



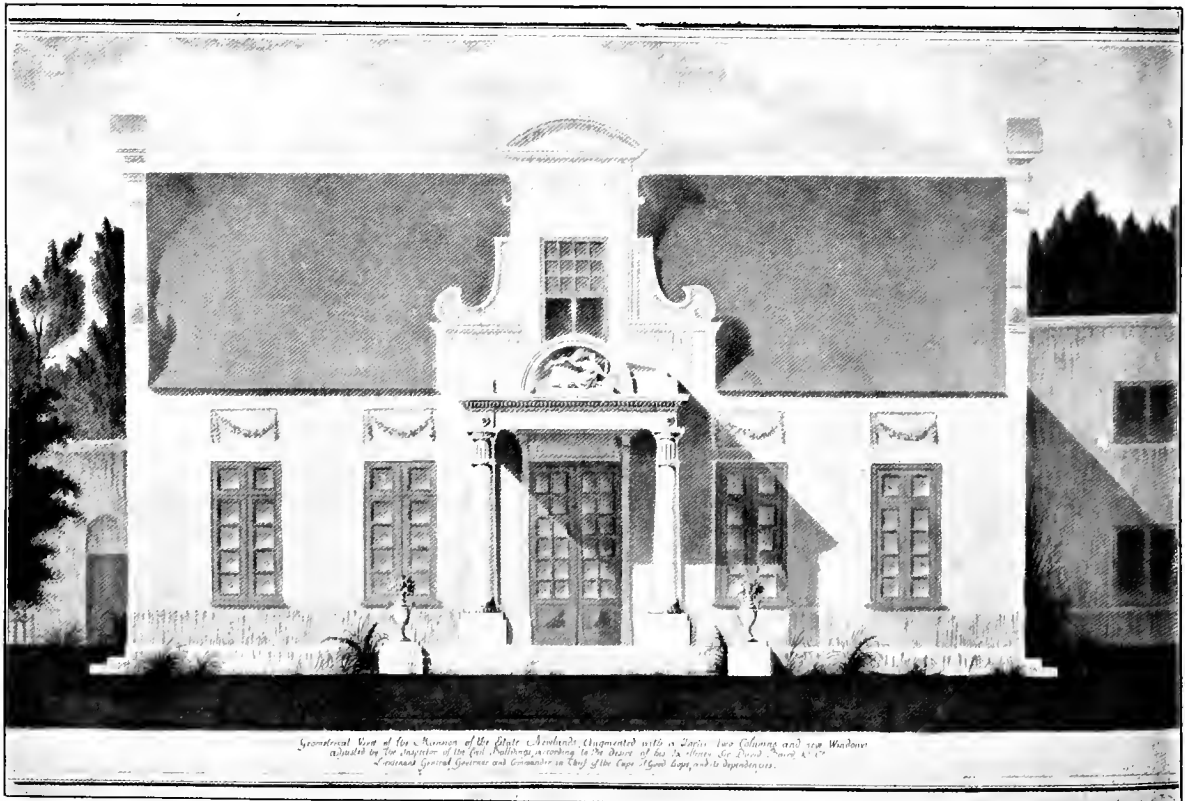
A BARN AT BOSHOF



THE FORMER HOUSE OF KLASSENBOSCH



PAPENBOOM, OR THE BREWERY
Built by Thibault. Destroyed by fire.



THIBAULT'S DESIGN for the alterations contemplated at
NEWLANDS HOUSE

VI

STELLENBERG

AT the foot of a slope that falls towards Kenilworth from Wynberg Hill and its crown of silver-trees stands the old homestead of Stellenberg, so hidden beneath its ancient oaks that a stranger in the land, passing along any of the main roads, would not suspect its existence. The trams to Wynberg and Cape Town rattle on their dusty way past the end of its avenue, 'desirable villa residences, complete with every modern convenience,' have sprung up within an acorn's throw, a lawn tennis club has broken in upon its stately calm. But the fine old house cares for none of these things, and Stellenberg stands as aloof in its old-world dignity from the busy world outside its narrowed borders as it stood two hundred years ago, when these borders enclosed a hundred morgen and more of good land.

In 1697 Simon van der Stel made the grant of land to the burgher Jacobus Vogel. Additional grants were made in the two centuries that followed, until at one time the property included land as far as Rosmead Avenue in the direction of the Flats, while it covered most of the land on which Kenilworth and Claremont now stand.

In 1710 Vogel's homestead was burned to the ground and the present beautiful house was built immediately afterwards, probably much on the lines of its predecessor. Its ground plan is that common to most of the Peninsula houses—the square **U** type—straight-fronted, with two wings running back at right angles and leaving an open space behind the great central hall. This space is sometimes paved with large red or blue tiles or with cobble-stones, and spanned by a grape-vine ; sometimes it is utilized as a small garden for daphne, gardenias, or other sweet-scented flowers. At Stellenberg it is enclosed by a fine gateway, with wreathed columns surmounted by vases.

The gable above the entrance is almost a facsimile of the front gable of Simon van der Stel's Groot Constantia. This, and its name, indicate the friendship between Jacobus Vogel and the van der Stels which was demonstrated when he, with Guillaume Heems, Hendrik Donker, and other prominent agriculturists, came forward to give their testimony in favour of Willem Adriaan van der Stel, who had been accused of forbidding the free burghers to sell vegetables to the ships.

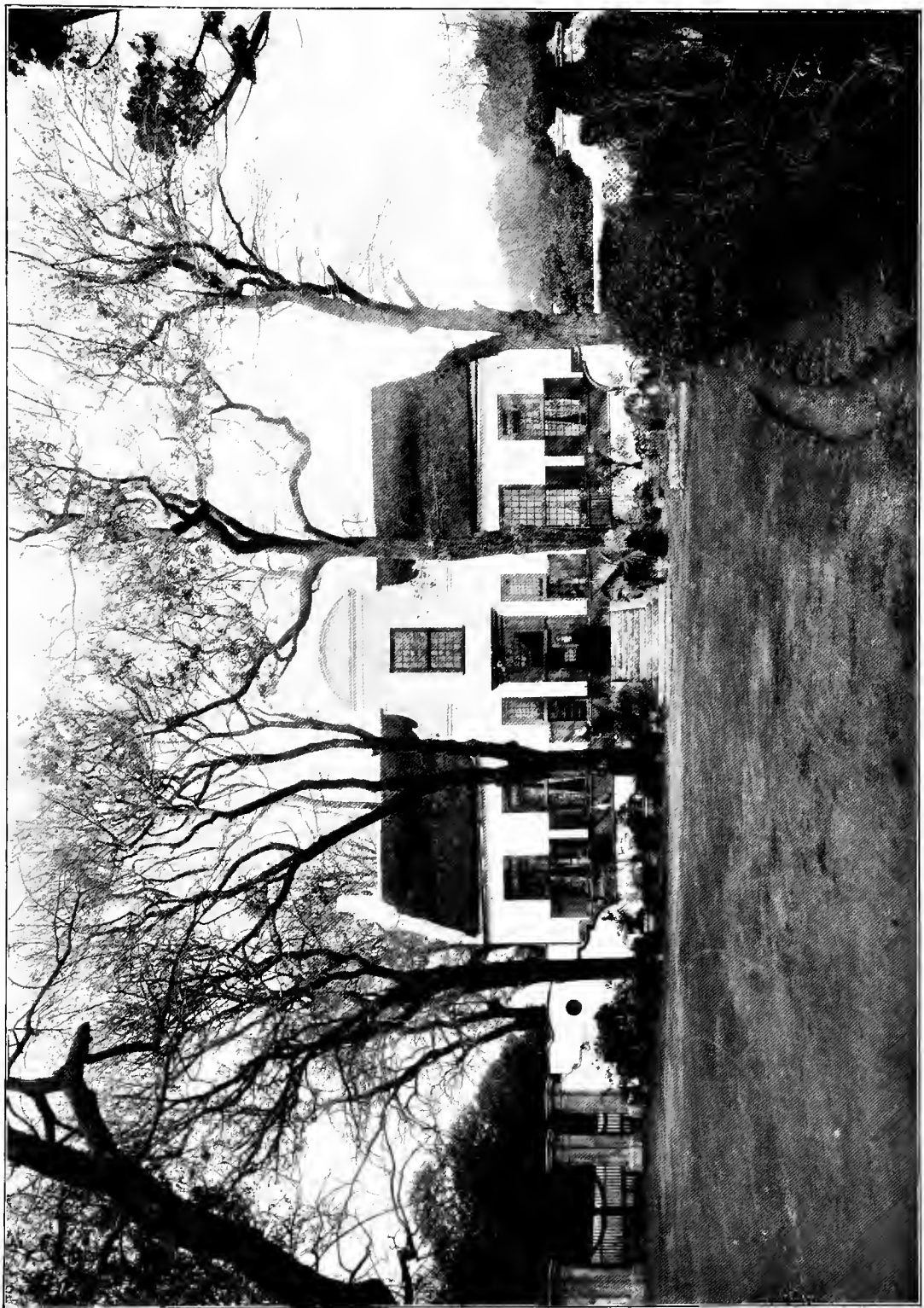
Probably Simon van der Stel stood sponsor for Stellenberg, as he had stood for Stellenbosch and Simonsberg and Simon's Bay and Simon's Vallei. It was a comprehensible weakness, that yearning to see his name stamped on the country he loved, but it is, perhaps, as well that all his successors did not follow his example—imagination reels at the thought of the unsuspected perils of complimentary nomenclature through which South Africa has passed.

The teak shutters, pierced occasionally with a heart to admit air, the twisted chimney, and the ironwork of the external hasps and hinges are unusually good, even for an old Cape homestead. The metalwork throughout the house, especially the brass door-handles and finger-plates, is very fine, and the latter have served as examples in the rebuilding of Groote Schuur and for the houses which are being modelled on old Cape lines throughout South Africa.

As is usual in most of the larger homesteads, the long dining-hall which forms the centre of the house is divided from the voorhuis or entrance-hall by a fine teak screen, with glass panels. These screens were introduced from the East, the idea being brought from Batavia, and they may be the work of Malay slaves, or, with equal probability, of the master-carpenters sent out by the Company. It is on record that Martin Melck of Elsenburg paid upwards of £300 in the days of Governor Tulbagh for a slave skilled in ironwork, and, as we know, the van der Stels drew down on themselves the very comprehensible wrath of the East Indian Government by detaining at the Cape artificers who were on their way to Batavia.

In common with many of the burghers of his day, Jacobus Vogel appears to have owned a town house as well as a country residence, for a grant of building land in Tuin Plein, near the Company's Guest House, stands against his name. I wonder whether he expended upon it one half of the love and care with which he built the stately homestead at the foot of the Wijnbergen, perhaps under the guidance and advice of Governor Simon himself. After the death of Vogel Stellenberg passed through the hands of many successive owners who have left no particular mark behind them. In 1742 it belonged to Jan de Wit—probably the John White who married Maria Adriaanse, dutchified his name and settled at the Cape early in the eighteenth century.

In 1795 Stellenberg emerged from private life as the residence of the Secunde—the second official in the Council of Policy—Johannes Izak Rhenius, and in the early days of the eighteenth century it was the residence of Commissary-General de Mist, the Special Commissioner sent out from the Batavian Republic in 1802 to take over



STELLENBERG



FRONT GABLE, STELLENBERG



THE STOEP, STELLENBERG

the Cape when it was given back to the Dutch in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty of Amiens. He was accompanied by Lieutenant-General Jan Willem Janssens, whom he installed as Governor in March 1803, though de Mist himself continued to act as Commissary-General until his departure in 1805. During this period he lived at Stellenberg with his daughter Augusta.

De Mist was a great gentleman, as his letters show. I like to think of the pleasant hours he must have spent, seated on the old flagged stoep of Stellenberg, smoking and talking with his friend brave General Janssens, while the eighteen-year-old Augusta Uitenhage de Mist poured out their coffee. Janssens was another very fine gentleman, fated to lead his half-hearted troops against the might of England three years later, when Holland had become so weak and Napoleon so strong that the Cape—the key of the East—lay almost within the grasp of the Man of Destiny. England saw the peril, and acted—as she has not always acted—promptly. But for that promptitude we might all be living under the Tricolour to-day instead of under the Union Jack.

De Mist is remembered in connexion with the right to bear arms, granted by him to Cape Town in 1804.

‘The anchor, symbolizing Good Hope,’ he said, ‘as well as the gold ground on which this anchor rests, indicates my wish for the future wealth and prosperity of this settlement. The same is covered and protected with a red shield bearing three gold rings, the coat of arms which we know was borne by your father and founder van Riebeeck. Hang then this coat of arms in his honour within and without on the walls of your Town House.’

To the town of Uitenhage, so called after his daughter, he had previously granted the right to bear arms.

After the departure of de Mist Stellenberg passed through the hands of various owners—Charles Blair, John Amber, Sebastian Valentyn Cloete, Hendrik Cornelis Dreyer, and so on, until it came into the possession of the Feltham family in 1878. The ground that belongs to the old homestead to-day is but a fragment of the wide lands of Jacobus Vogel, but the old house is unspoiled, and the great oaks in the courtyard may well have looked down on Simon van der Stel himself and have been amongst those young trees upon whose rapid growth he wrote with enthusiasm to Holland. The Jonkheer’s house, behind the main building, was built for the eldest son of the family, and is a charming residence to-day, harmonious within and without.

The grant of Stellenberg to Jacobus Vogel had been made conditional on the planting of trees—a characteristic van der Stel touch

which is found in many other grants. He was evidently a man of peace, for in all the storms and upheavals of those troubled times his name appears but rarely. He busied himself on his farm and among his young plantations. He paid a tithe of his corn to the Government ; and we may be sure that it was good corn, not that which drew caustic and uncivil criticism from Batavia and damaged the reputation of the Cape.

Houses such as Stellenberg are a mute reproach to a generation that has preferred pepper-pots to gables, plush-covered gimcrackery to fine and simple furniture, door-knobs of white china picked out with gold to old brass crutch-handles. When the victorious troops of Charles the Fifth overran Spain a band of zealots reared unto their own shame a hideous rococo church, all plaster roses and sprawling cherubs, in the very heart of that wonder of Moorish Cordova—the mosque of the eleven hundred columns of porphyry and jasper, of the double arches and the countless aisles and the white marble Mihráb formed like a cockle-shell.

‘ You have destroyed what you can never rebuild,’ said the Emperor, when he looked on the work of destruction.

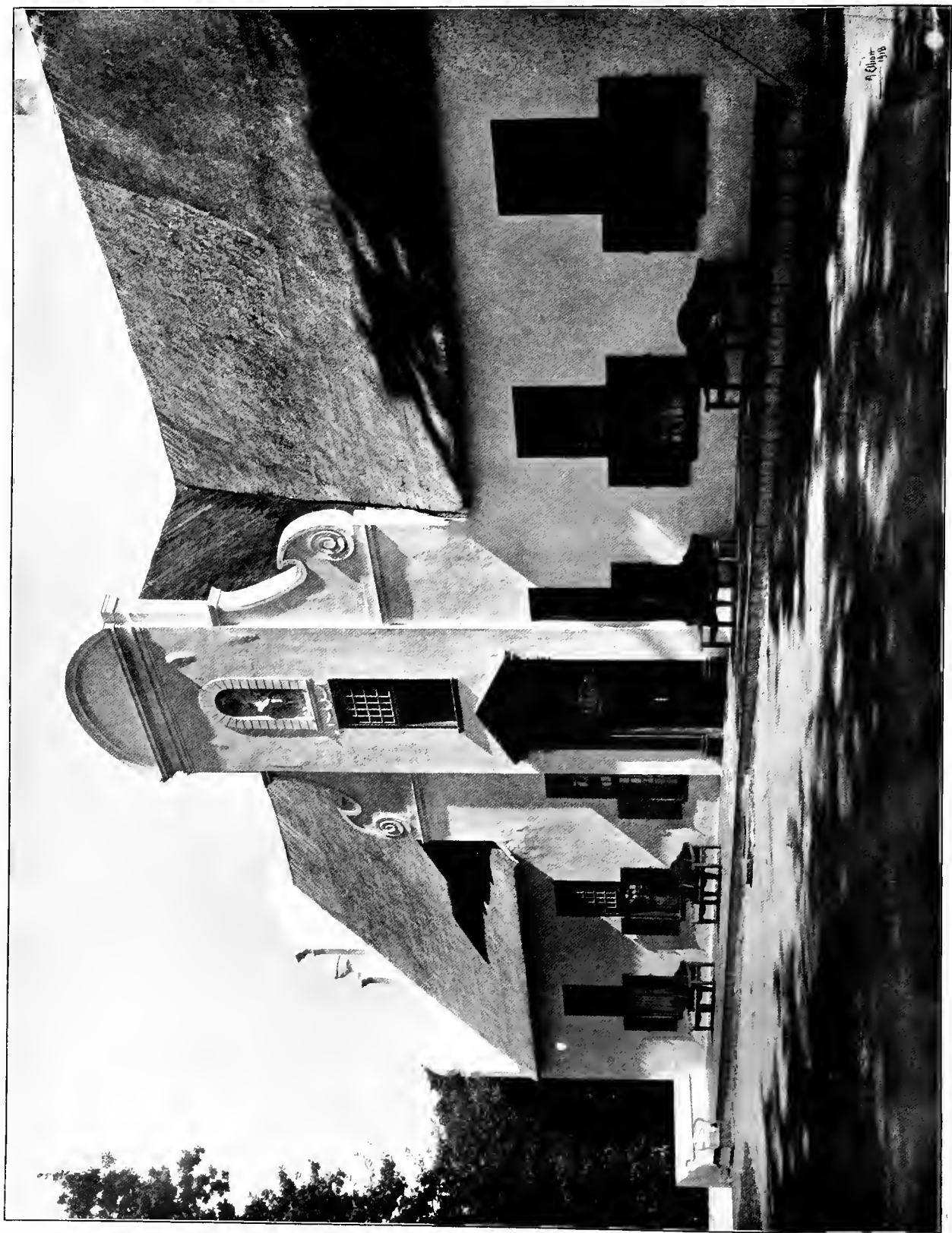
Let the Cape take heed to its ways. At this moment beautiful houses are in danger of being pulled down or altered—because they are old-fashioned, say their owners, because the roofs leak and it is a bother to keep them in order, because anything you like for an excuse. The plain truth is that the owners who do these things really prefer pepper-pots to curved gables, just as the soldiers of Charles the Fifth preferred plaster cherubs to porphyry columns.



HALL SCREEN



STELLENBERG COURTYARD ENTRANCE



GROOT CONSTANTIA

VII

THE VALLEY OF CONSTANTIA

THE heart and soul of the beautiful valley in which it lies is the great house of Simon van der Stel, who arrived at the Cape as Commander in 1679, was some years later promoted to the rank of Governor (in which office he was succeeded by his son Willem Adriaan in 1699) and died at Groot Constantia in 1711. The land was granted to him in 1685 by Hendrik van Reede tot Drakenstein, Lord of Mydrecht, 'as Deputy of their High Mightinesses,' as the old deeds have it, on one of the annual visits of inspection paid to the Cape. Here van der Stel built the house which is the best example of seventeenth-century architecture left to the country, and here he planted vineyards and orchards, experimenting in agriculture for the benefit of the new land and making that Constantia wine which was to become famous throughout the world.

The ground-plan of Constantia is less regular than that of the majority of the Peninsula houses. The voorhuis or entrance is a small square hall paved in the pattern of a star, the device borne on the van der Stel arms, with red and white stone from the Steenberg mountains in the neighbourhood, and from it opens the large reception room on the right, which has a floor and ceiling of yellow-wood (probably cut from the forests on the road to Hout Bay), tall sash windows set in teak and a charming wall-cupboard at the end of the room. On the left is a smaller room, with bedrooms beyond it, while the long banqueting hall defies the tradition of the U-houses and runs parallel with the stoep, behind these front rooms. Here, too, graceful cupboards are sunk in the walls. It is a fine, dignified room and has been the scene of much festivity in the life of the Cape. From a door in the rear steps lead down under a roof of bougainvillea to a wide space set about with the oaks planted by the old Governor, now tall and venerable trees. Here we may picture Simon van der Stel and his friends seated, smoking their long pipes, their wigs laid aside for coolness, the little stream which then ran below the wine cellar crooning contentedly over the pebbles.

François Leguat, the French voyager, who visited the Cape in 1698, writes of the place :

‘ The Governor has a pleasant House called Constantia, about two leagues from the Cape. Here he lives the greatest part of the year, not only on account of the Air, which is Excellent, the fine Prospect, and the admirable Soil, but also by reason of the great quantity of Game which are thereabouts, Hunting being the greatest and most profitable diversion of this country.’

In 1779 Groot Constantia came into the possession of the Cloete family, Hendrik Cloete paying 60,000 gulden for it to Jan Serrurier, acting on behalf of the Burgher Raad. Behind the homestead Hendrik Cloete built the present beautiful wine cellar in 1791, and employed the great sculptor Anton Anreith to adorn its pediment with the frieze which is one of the Cape’s greatest treasures. It represents Ganymede surrounded by Loves, and the figures are grouped and modelled with singular grace and ability.

Up the hill-side, above a long pleached alley of oak, is a graceful bath, presided over by a Triton through whose horn flows the limpid mountain water. It is probable that this, too, is the work of Anreith—who, with equal probability, is not responsible for the figure of Plenty over the front door of the house, a tradition in the Cloete family assigning this to an earlier date.

We have a picture of Constantia drawn in 1771 by another traveller, Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, the author of *Paul et Virginie*.

‘ On our approach we passed through a wood of silver trees. They resemble the pine tree, have a leaf like the willow, and are covered with a white down which is very shining.

‘ The forest seemed to be all of silver, when the wind blew them about and the sun shone, each leaf glittered like a plate of metal. We walked through these groves, so rich and delightful, in order to look at the vines, which, though less splendid in appearance, are of far greater utility.

‘ A broad avenue of old oaks¹ conducted us to the vineyards of Constance. Over the front of the house we saw a vile painting of a strapping girl, and ugly enough, reclining on a pillar. I took it for a Dutch allegorical figure of Chastity; but they told me it was the portrait of a Madame Constantia, daughter of a Governor of the Cape.’

Bernardin de Saint-Pierre was somewhat inaccurate. The silver tree, *Leucadendron argenteum*, is not like a pine; the figure over the door is a statue, not a painting, though ‘ ugly enough ’, in truth, and a marked contrast to the work of Anreith. Moreover, there is good ground for the supposition that Constantia received its name in memory of a little daughter of the Lord of Mydrecht, who died in the East Indies not long before the land was granted by her father to van der Stel, and who bore the beautiful name of Constantia.

¹ In the English edition the word *chênes* is wrongly translated as ‘ chestnuts ’.



GROOT CONSTANTIA

From the oil-painting by R. Gwelo Goodman.

But his description of the silver trees, the 'knights in shining mail', as Ian Colvin has called them, is as true to-day as it was a hundred and fifty years ago.

Another theory of the naming of Constantia assigns it to a desire on the part of Simon van der Stel to compliment his absent wife, who did not accompany him to the Cape, with the assurance of his constancy, but this is probably incorrect.

Over the old house rests an enchanted spell. Sit on the stoep or in the shade of the oaks, and, if you can forget for a while the modern wine-making machinery near at hand, you may see the shadows of the past, you may share the old Governor's pride in his beautiful house as it rises from the ground, you may join in the stately revels which the large rooms must have witnessed. And you may sit with him in his solitude when Louis van Assenburgh reigned at the Castle, and the ship that bore his favourite son to exile and ruin had vanished over the horizon.

Many visions must have passed before his eyes in those last days, the echo of the grandchildren's voices must have sounded in his ears long after the ship had sailed which took away every one bearing the name of van der Stel save the old man himself and the wife of his youngest son Frans, who followed her husband to Holland shortly afterwards.

And through the white gates of Groot Constantia and along the red road that leads to Cape Town, and to the church his son had built, they carried him a few years afterwards; and there he sleeps to this day, though it was left to a later generation to pull down his tombstone in its zeal for 'improvements'. We have a description of this tombstone from the pen of François Valentyn, who paid several visits to the Cape at the close of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries and was the author of a valuable book on the Dutch possessions in the East.

'On both sides of his escutcheon are seen various gilt pieces of ordnance, some trumpets, harness and guns, also heavily gilded. Above the hatchment hangs a standard, and below it a man resting in full harness on his left arm, holding the staff of command in his right hand. On his head is a plumed helmet. On the wall hang a coat of mail, a black helmet and other ornaments.'

There are other memories connected with old Constantia. In her letters to her sisters, published in *The Lives of the Lindsays*, Lady Anne Barnard tells the story of the lump of stalactite which once stood in the hall as the result of an incautious utterance on the part of Hendrik Cloete. Visiting the stalactite caves in the Caledon district he was attracted by the charms of a particularly

fine and glittering mass, and exclaimed that he would give a large sum of money to the man who would convey it to Constantia, after which he went on his way without giving the matter a second thought, as others who have spoken in their haste have done before and since. Some weeks later, a wagon drawn by a team of patient oxen wound its way along the Constantia road and up to the stoep of the homestead, where Hendrik Cloete was probably sitting and smoking and thinking as little of stalactites as of metaphysics. In the wagon was the glittering lump ; on the driver's seat was a farmer who had heard the incautious offer and acted upon it. I forget the exact sum ; but Hendrik Cloete paid up like a man, and until recent years saw Groot Constantia pass from the Cloete family into the possession of the Government, the stalactite was a conspicuous feature in the hall.

Groot Constantia is now the Government wine farm, and where Simon van der Stel experimented in wine-making for the benefit of the seventeenth-century farmers the Agricultural Department of the Union of South Africa experiments to-day. It is a prosperous and lovely valley in which the old homestead lies, in the shade of the old man's great oaks. A mellow charm rests on the landscape, whether you see it when the vines are bursting into leaf, or in the drowsy warmth of the vintage, or clothed in its autumn robes of yellow and russet and deepest crimson.

Valentyn, who visited Groot Constantia in 1705 on the occasion of Simon van der Stel's birthday, says, ' Here are commonly to be seen the finest and most sought-after fruits of the Cape.' A great company was received and Commander Helot conveyed him, together with the Juffrouw van der Stel and Valkenier, the Admiral of the return fleet, in his coach with six horses. They were regaled with a sumptuous feast of fish, meat, venison, and ' with matchless fine and delicious fruit '.

I have gone to some considerable trouble, while in Holland, to trace the fortunes of the van der Stel family after the recall of Willem Adriaan, as well as of the antecedents of Simon van der Stel with a view to examining Kolbe's statement to the effect that his mother was a slave-girl, and I have to acknowledge with gratitude the valuable assistance given to me by Mynheer Jurriaan van Toll of the Royal Library at The Hague, by Jonkheer Six of Amsterdam, and by Dr. Lorentz. This is the family history in an abridged form, as given to me in Holland by these authorities.

Simon van der Stel, Councillor of Dordrecht, had a son Adriaan, who went to Batavia in 1623 in the service of the Dutch East India



HESTER ANNA LAURENS

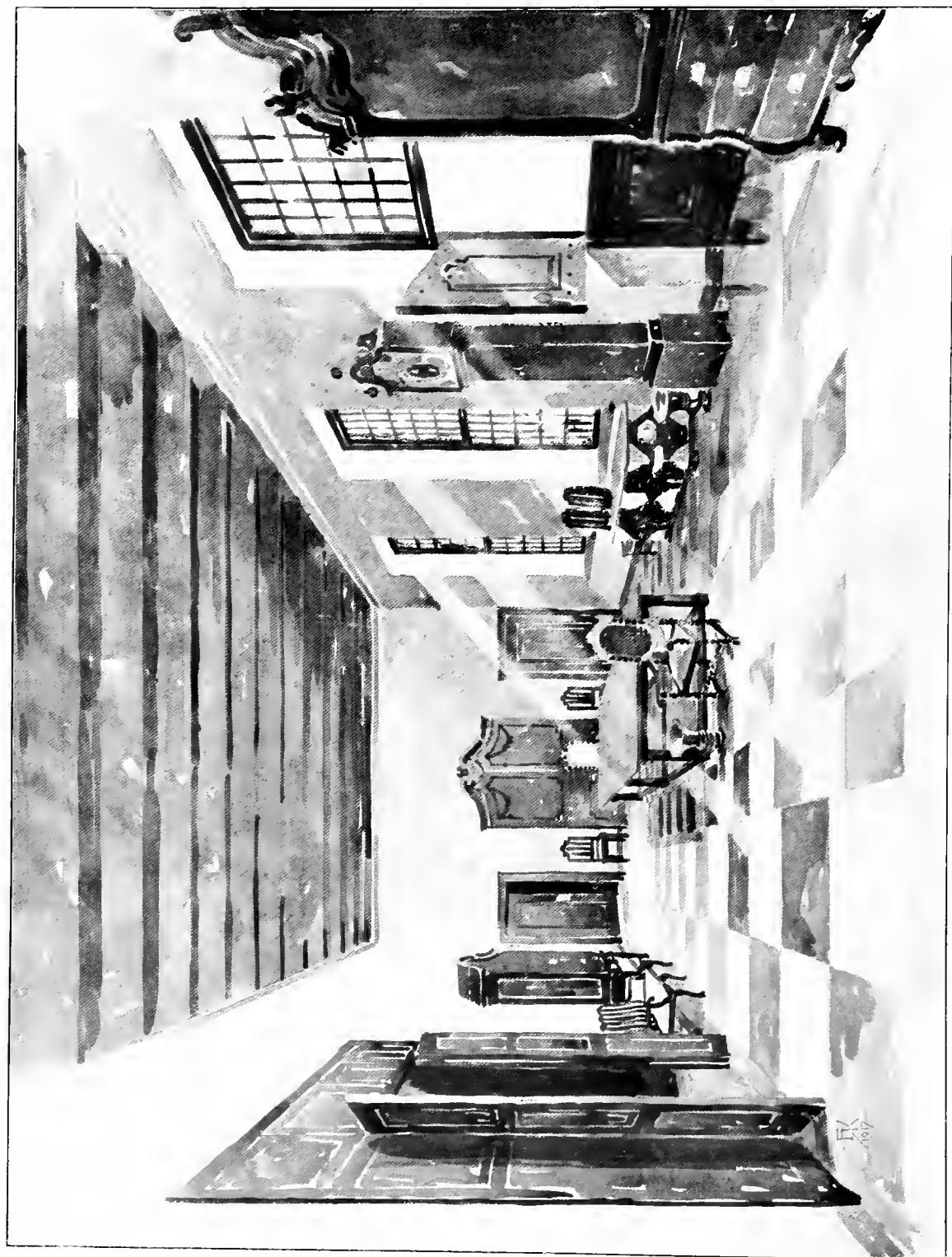
Daughter of the Landdrost of Stellenbosch

Married 1753 Hendrik Cloete of Constantia



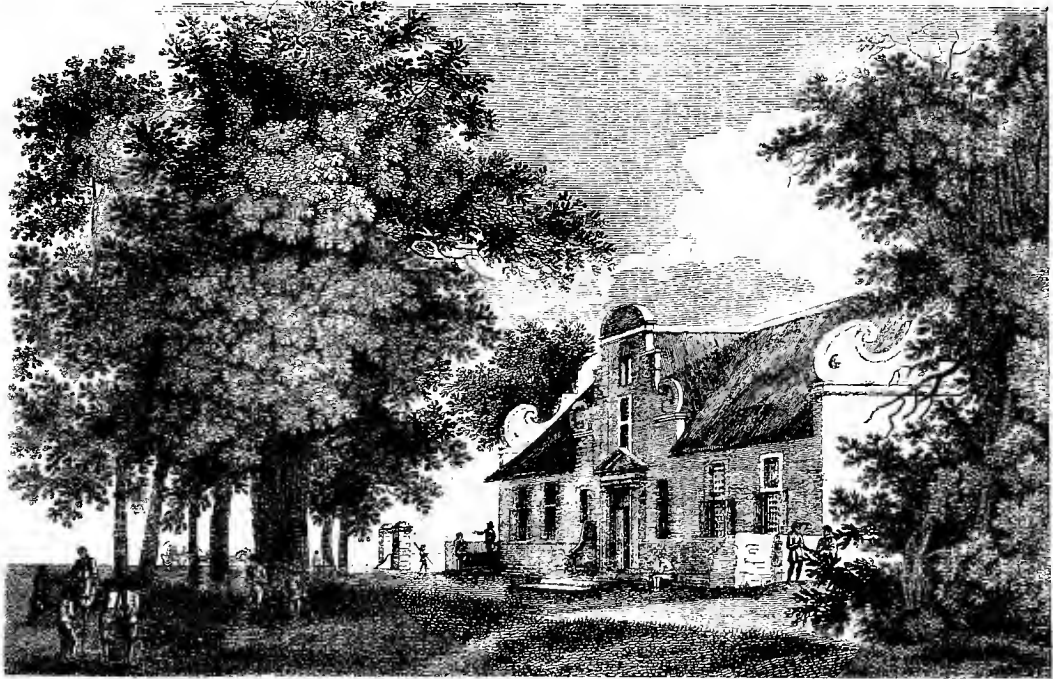
HENDRIK CLOETE OF CONSTANTIA

1725-1799



DINING HALL, GROOT CONSTANTIA

Company. This Adriaan married Maria Lievens at Batavia, March 3, 1639, and his son Simon was born on November 14, 1639, at Mauritius, where his father had been transferred with the rank of commander. There is therefore every good reason to suppose that he was the son of his father's wife; and had it been otherwise, as I am told by Mynheer van Toll, the father would have been obliged to confess the fact and acknowledge him publicly by letter as his son. Moreover, added Mynheer van Toll, it is highly improbable that a family of



GROOT CONSTANTIA

From an Eighteenth-Century Print

such distinction as the Sixes would have given their daughter in marriage to a man whose mother had been a slave-girl, so that this story is probably another of Kolbe's inaccuracies. After her husband's death—he was murdered in Ceylon—Maria Lievens married Mynheer Hendrick van Gent, Councillor of Batavia.

Simon van der Stel, described as Seigneur van Lim, married at Haarlem, in 1663, Johanna Jacoba Six, daughter of Willem Six and his wife Catalina Hinlopen, and they had six children. Of these, Willem Adriaan succeeded his father at the Cape, and another son, Adriaan, became Governor of Amboina and a man of great wealth.

Both of them left sons in Holland ; but it is difficult to trace the family much farther, although we know that Willem Adriaan's son Simon married Catharina Keyser at Amsterdam in 1726, and that one of Adriaan's sons, Johan, is described as a man of good position and considerable wealth. He inherited a fortune from his wife's brother which, having no children of his own, he left to Franciscus Theodorus, son of his brother Simon—the eldest son of Adriaan—both brothers having called their eldest sons after the paternal grandfather in the good old Dutch fashion.¹

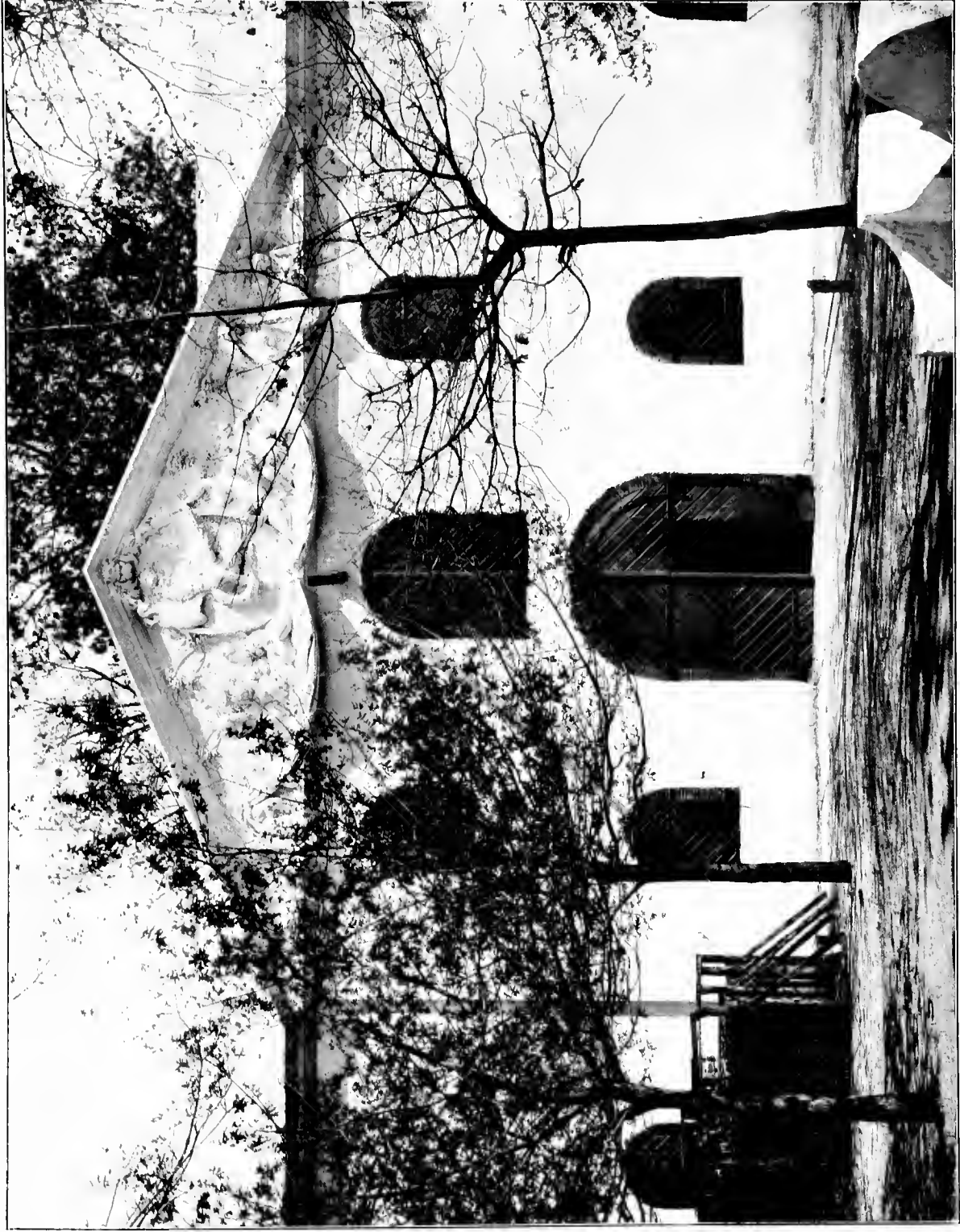
The uncertain glory of an April day flickered over the wide valley as we turned to the left on reaching the white gates of Groot Constantia and drove down a road bordered with oleanders, now crowned with fading clusters where had been rosy masses of almond-scented flowers. Another turn took us into one of the wide oak avenues which the old burghers of the Cape planted for posterity, two hundred years ago and more. Through the trees gleamed the tawny yellow of the autumn vine leaves, and far away on the horizon shone a line of burnished silver, as the blurred sunlight caught the distant waters of False Bay.

It was all lovely and mellow—the grey of the tree trunks, the gold of the leaves, the sheen of the sea. And behind all and above all the great purple mountain, knee deep in silver-trees and heath and fragrant wild geraniums.

The wide avenue led us to the steps of Hoop op Constantia.

A fine house—one of the finest that the early builders have bequeathed to us. It is on the lines common to most of the old Peninsula homesteads—a straight front with a gable over the entrance and two long wings running back at right angles, giving the effect of a solid, square building. The gables are of a form common in Amsterdam, very similar to those at the back of Simon van der Stel's own homestead of Groot Constantia close at hand. The two houses are of the same age, having been built shortly after 1685, when the land on which they stand was granted to the Governor by the Lord of Mydrecht, Commissioner of the Dutch East India Company. Tradition says that Hoop op Constantia was built for the accommodation of the officials who accompanied the old Governor in his pleasant villeggiatura, when south-easters and the summer heat made the Government House in the Castle uncomfortable. Meetings of the Council of Policy were probably held in the large airy rooms of Constantia, or under the shade of the young oaks—

¹ The van Baerle family is descended, on the maternal side, from Willem Adriaan van der Stel, through his son Simon.



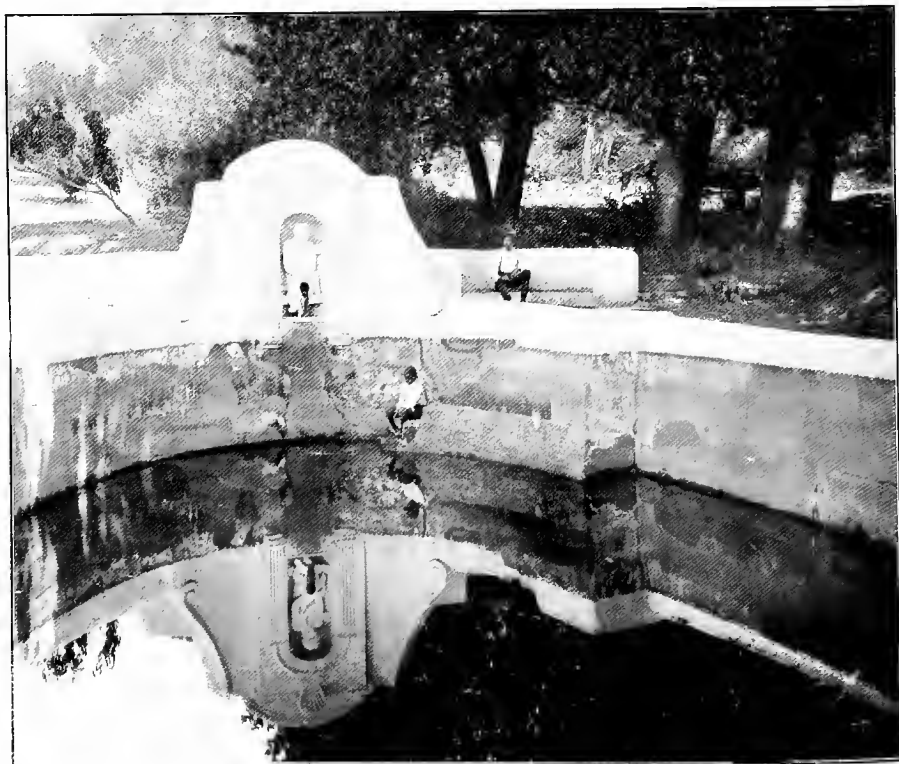
WINE-CELLAR, GROOT CONSTANTIA



JONKHEER'S HOUSE, GROOT CONSTANTIA

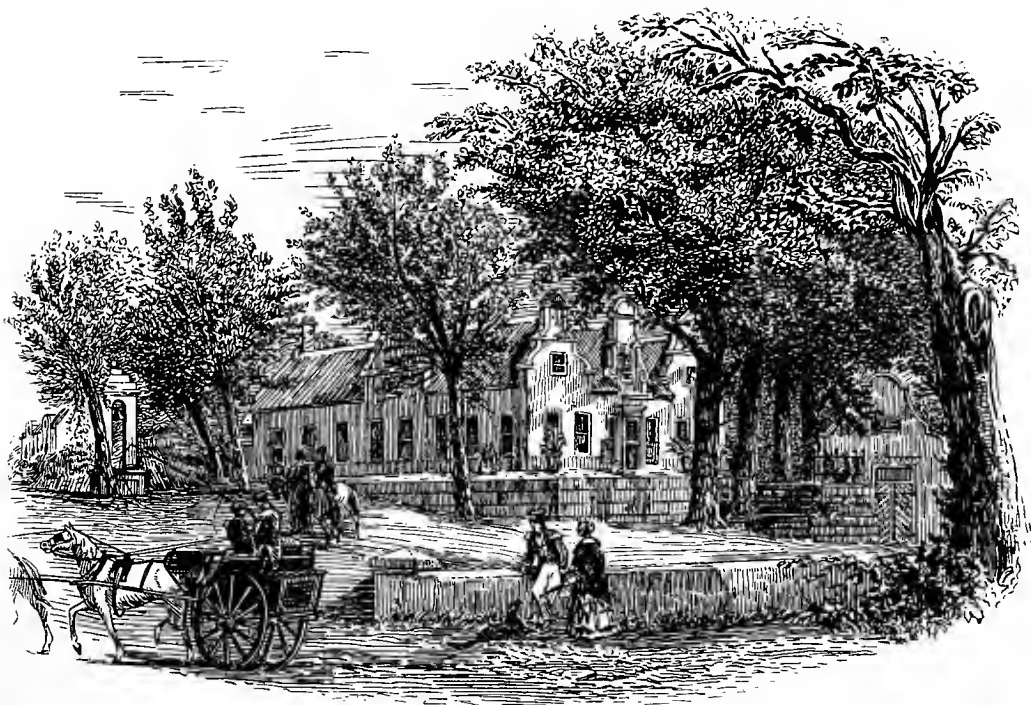


THE TRITON



BATH AT GROOT CONSTANTIA

now venerable giants—upon whose rapid growth the old man expatiated in his dispatches to the Seventeen in Holland. The passage of time has left its mark upon Hoop in the loss of several gables. An early print of the house shows a very unusual arrangement of three gables in the front and another in the middle of the side wing; of these all but the one over the front door have been taken down. The effect is that the house has lost much of its originality, though it is still harmonious and dignified. The great sash windows are



HOOP OP CONSTANTIA

In the eighteenth century.

unspoiled, the slave bell still hangs in its tower, the smooth brown thatch has not been replaced by corrugated iron—and for all these things there is cause for thankfulness in these days.

There is a sunken garden below the stoep, in which palms and guavas grow among the tall red spikes of aloes, and over all broods an air of peace. Hoop op Constantia has, however, been agitated by fierce feuds in its times. Early in the last century it belonged to a lady who is oddly described in legal documents as 'Johannes Lambertus Coleyn, widow'. She was clearly a woman of means and determination, for she owned another property in the district—

Sweet Water, it was called—and, as her only way of reaching it was through her neighbour's farm, through it she went without a moment's hesitation. The neighbour, Hendrik Oostwald Eksteen of Bergvliet, not unnaturally resented a driving-road being made across his property without so much as a by-your-leave, and he carried his grievance before the Landdrost and Heemraden. Judgment was given for the widow, and we can imagine the satisfaction with which she drove back to Hoop—probably going out of her way to use the Bergvliet road.

Undaunted by defeat, Eksteen again appealed to the Court of Justice, which again upheld the widow. Still undismayed, he carried his woes before the Court of Appeals, which annihilated everything that everybody had done before and sent him home a triumphant victor.

You are mistaken if you think that that was an end of the whole matter. The widow appealed to Caesar, as represented by the Privy Council—England being in temporary occupation of the Cape—and emerged finally victorious, with a decree which gave her right-of-way across Bergvliet. It is a pity that the records do not go a step further and tell us the attitude of the two neighbours to each other after their successive victories and defeats. Probably, once having got her way, she never used the road again without asking his permission.

Hoop op Constantia first passed into private ownership in 1716, when it became the property of Pieter Meyer, and later in the eighteenth century it became the property of the Colyn family. It is now owned by Mr. Malan. The house was originally known as Klein Constantia, a name which was subsequently applied to another charming old house in the neighbourhood. Numerous early writers speak of the two Constantias in terms of warm admiration. Kolbe writes of 'that lovely seat', and Latrobe, more than a century later, says, 'There is an appearance of ancient grandeur about the place which pleased us much.' The Abbé de la Caille and others are agreed that the famous Constantia wine, which was made from grapes that were almost raisins, varied according to the Constantia which produced it, though only a low hedge divided them. Captain Percival, writing in 1796, says 'Great Constantia produces the red wine of that name and Lesser Constantia the white'.

Las Cases, in his *Mémorial de Ste.-Hélène*, says that he sent Napoleon some Constantia wine, and in his last moments, when he had rejected everything that was offered to him, the dying Emperor asked for 'a glass of Las Cases's wine'.

Not far off is the house now known as Klein Constantia, built, tradition says, by Simon van der Stel for his daughter Catalina, who



ALPHEN



DOOR AT ALPHEN



GABLES AT HOOP OP CONSTANTIA



KLEIN CONSTANTIA, FRONT GABLE



GABLES AT GROOT CONSTANTIA



married a Mynheer van Rhyn. It is a plain, but dignified, white house and is the property of Mr. Lochner de Villiers. The gable over the entrance is of a more severe type than those of the neighbouring homesteads, and bears more resemblance to the gables of Belgium than to those of Holland. As in many other old houses in the Peninsula, only the lower half of the front door is of solid wood. The upper half is a sash window which is pushed up to afford ingress—a picturesque but not particularly convenient device. These divided doors are common to most of the early homesteads; but in the country districts the upper half is usually of solid wood, for the most part teak, with finely wrought iron hinges and locks. The old burghers had a genius for setting down their houses in the fairest landscapes, and there are few sweeps of mountain and sea to compare with the view from Klein Constantia. We looked across False Bay, where Hangklip stood out sharply against the blue of the sky, and the waves that beat against Seal Island made a scurry of white foam. It was even more enchanting when we turned towards Table Mountain and the foreground of autumn vines splashed with silver, as the wind stirred the leaves of a group of silver-trees close at hand.

Not far from Klein Constantia is the house of Buitenverwachting, once known as Plumstead, but now restored to its original name. Rightly restored, for the meaning is too pleasant to be lost—‘beyond expectation.’ It belonged to a brother of the Eksteen who fought the widow Coleyn, and was built towards the end of the eighteenth century on part of the land originally owned by Simon van der Stel. There is a charming front door of teak, with carved ropework decoration and wide steps of yellow brick. The rooms are large and lofty; the view from the stoep magnificent—little wonder that its early owner loved it and found it ‘beyond expectation’. The corrugated iron verandah is not in harmony with the dignity of the house.

On the way back to Wynberg you pass a great square house cast in a different mould—Mr. Henry Cloete’s homestead of Alphen. An aisle of dark-green pine trees leads to the gate, tall oaks protect it from the heat, its wide vineyards stretch towards Hout Bay Nek in seemingly endless succession.

Alphen stands on part of the land granted to Simon van der Stel. In 1714 a portion of the property was transferred to Theunis van Schalkwyk, and passed in the following year to Jan Brommert, the wharfmaster, one of the burghers who stood by Willem Adriaan van der Stel in the troubles of two centuries ago. Tradition says that the present house was built by Abraham Lever in 1753, and

that it was added to shortly afterwards by Captain de Waal, a sailor who had been in the service of the Dutch East India Company. This de Waal was related to the old Dutch family of Overbeek. In 1765 Alphen was bought by Jan Serrurier, and a few years later we find Sparrman writing of Alphen as the residence of Kirsten. Andrew Sparrman was a learned Swedish naturalist and physician who spent some time at the Cape in 1772. In the intervals of medical practice and acting as tutor to the children of the Resident at Simonstown, Johan Kirsten, he made expeditions to the country districts. The results of his observations, botanical and otherwise, as well as the account of a journey to Kaffraria on a second visit in 1775-6, were published by him a few years later.

From Kirsten's possession Alphen passed to the family of Dreyer, who retained it until 1850. In the days when Lord Charles Somerset was Governor, the fine old house belonged to Thomas Frederik Dreyer, who had a pretty daughter, and her fame has come down to us in the singular tradition that she was courted by Dr. Barry.

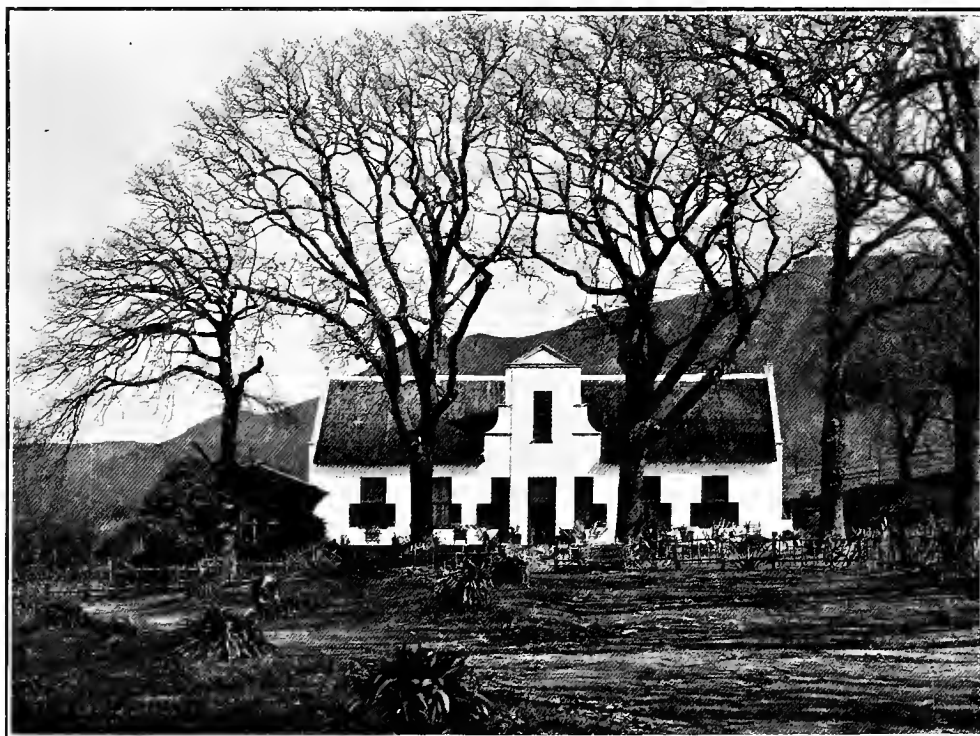
Dr. Barry was the woman who for most of her life passed as a man, and who actually rose to the military rank of Inspector-General of Hospitals. She was medical adviser to Lord Charles Somerset, and with him was a frequent visitor at Alphen. Great hunting parties were held, in which both took part; there were prodigious banquets in the old hall, and long chats on the stoep over coffee and pipes. In all these delights Dr. Barry played her part manfully. What her motive was in courting Miss Dreyer it is difficult to say—perhaps the desire to avert suspicion from herself. To the credit of the lady's perspicacity it must be added that she turned a deaf ear to the voice of the charmer, married John Cloete, and lived out her peaceful life in the old homestead of Buitenverwachting.

Alphen, like many another house, has lost its original roof. But it is a fine building, with great dignity in the massive squareness of its outline, its great windows and doors. It is the centre to-day of a thriving wine industry, worked by the most modern methods and machinery. The old way was more picturesque, when the vats were heaped high with white or purple grapes and the juice was pressed out beneath the feet of the slaves, singing some old-world chanty as they danced. Doubtless, however, there are points in favour of machinery, incongruous as it may seem on these dreamy, lovely old wine-farms, where you are tempted to feel that there is nothing better in life than to sit in the shade of the great oaks and eat the sun-kissed grapes.

But Alphen, for all its calm beauty, is a place where men work—



HOOP OP CONSTANTIA



KLEIN CONSTANTIA



TOKAI



STOEP OF TOKAI WITH GRAPE-VINE

as the well-grown vineyards, the thriving orchards, the busy wine cellars testify. Far up the valley run orderly vine plantations, brown in winter against the red soil, green in summer, golden and scarlet in autumn. In the fruit season peaches, nectarines, and plums are sent off in vast quantities to Covent Garden and Johannesburg, and the gatherers' baskets are heaped high with golden and green melons, purple figs, and the finest grapes in the world.

Men work here, it is true. But I think that Pharaoh's taskmaster himself would sometimes turn a blind eye if they dreamed a little too, in the shade of the whispering pines or in the mellow sunshine of the vineyards.

VIII

AMONG THE SOUTHERN HILLS

AS you drive towards Tokai from Wynberg you turn out of the soft red dust of the Constantia road on to a good hard track which leads to the district below the Steenberg mountains, with many ups and downs, across a smiling plain, green with vines and yellow with pumpkins under the January sun. On your right lie Groot Constantia, beautiful Hoop, Buitenverwachting, and many other homesteads, half buried in their trees, a white gable gleaming here and there among the green. To your left are vineyards, small cottages with tangles of flowers and fig-trees and gnarled pomegranates in the gardens, the white sands of the Flats, and the far-off blue waters of False Bay.

Out of this sunshine and colour the road plunges into a hoary avenue of stone pines, great umbrella-headed trees with grey and pink stems, the branches forming a Gothic aisle through which the sunshine filters, dyeing orange-coloured the sand below. The trill of a cicada speaks of the hot sun without—under the old trees is perpetual shade. Tokai is part of the grazing-ground granted to Simon van der Stel by Wouter Valkenier, Commissioner for the Dutch East India Company, in 1700, and every student of Cape history knows that where a van der Stel owned a morgen of land he planted trees. It is possible that these are van der Stel trees; but, be that as it may, the land owes a wealth of gratitude to the men of bygone days who worked for those who were to come after them—well knowing that they themselves would never ride under the wide avenues of oaks and pines, but content that others should rejoice in the fruits of their labours.

A bend of the avenue brings into sight the fine homestead of Tokai, flanked on either side by the stables and slave quarters.

The earliest grant of which there is any record, apart from van der Stel's grazing rights, is that of 1792, when the land was given to Andreas Rauch by the acting-governor, Rhenius. This would suggest that Rauch was the builder of the 'beautiful country residence', as Tokai is described in a notice of sale in the *Cape Town Gazette and African Advertiser* of August 13, 1800, wherein are also mentioned

superior vines, excellent casks, and good slaves. It is, however, difficult to believe that only eight years elapsed between the foundation and sale of a prosperous wine-farm, and it is more probable that the land had previously been held on loan and that the house dates from earlier than 1792.

The old builder put good work into his beautiful homestead. Tokai, which is one of the square **U**-houses, has fine teak shutters, the ceilings are of yellow-wood, the sash-windows of the fine type taken to England by Dutch William and to the Cape by Simon van der Stel. It has a fine pillared stoep, where a thriving grape vine softens the severity of the front gable, which is of a type seldom found on the earlier houses, and has been ascribed to the influence of Thibault on the architecture of the latter part of the eighteenth century.

There is little space for ghost stories in these records of the old houses, but room must be found for that of Tokai.

In 1814 it became the property of Hendrik Oostwald Eksteen, who was a hospitable soul, and many and riotous were the feasts held in the old hall—then about 56 feet long, but now divided by a partition. At the conclusion of one of these feasts a young man, filled with Hendrik Eksteen's good wine and his own misplaced courage, sprang to his feet.

'A wager,' he shouted. 'A wager. Will any man bet that I do not ride up the steps of the stoep and round the dining-table on my Arab?'

'Done,' said a neighbour, incoherently. 'My fur-trimmed cloak against your new saddle.'

A storm of expostulation broke from the older men and a twitter of alarm from the women, for the stoep of Tokai is fifteen feet above the level of the ground; but the young man brushed them aside and ran down one of the steep flights of steps leading to the werf below.

In tense silence they watched him as he mounted and rode up the steps, the Arab feeling his way with careful precision. With a shout of relief they greeted him as he rode along the paved stoep, in at the wide door, and round the long table glittering with silver and cut-glass, heaped with fruit and the débris of the feast. But, as he would have dismounted, flushed with triumph, the man who had taken the wager claimed that the matter could not be considered finished until he had ridden out of the door again and down the steps. I wish that I need not finish the story. For of course he made the attempt, and halfway down the horse stumbled and—well, to this day, so it is said, if you have time enough and faith enough, you may see the rider in all the pride of his pitiful young folly, you may watch the dainty footsteps of his Arab as they ride to their death.

Indeed, the story *must* be true, for is not the mark of the horse's hoof still to be seen on the floor of the great hall ?

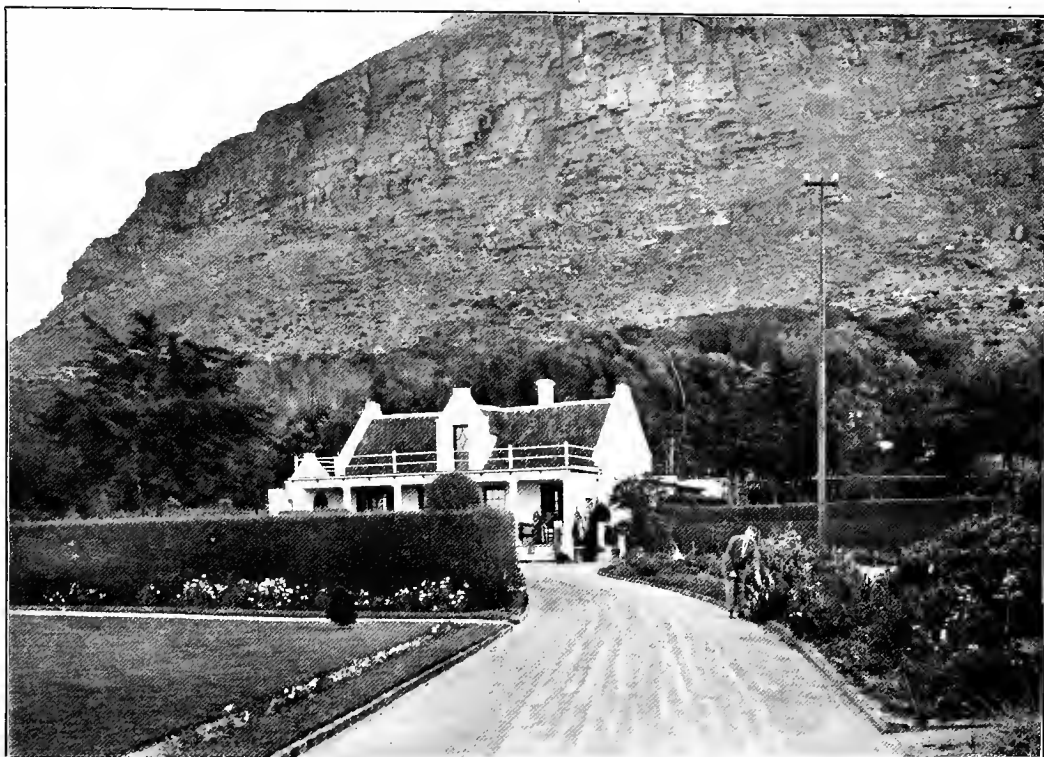
About thirty years ago Tokai was purchased by the Government, and is now the centre of the work of afforestation carried on under the Chief Conservator of Forests. Much has been rightly said against planting alien trees on the slopes of Table Mountain, more particularly the eucalyptus and wattle, which swallow up the silver-trees and glorious wild flowers, though such criticism cannot be levelled against the work of clothing bare districts with forests of eucalyptus and conifers, which, with their sister plantations elsewhere, will some day supply South Africa with all the telegraph posts and railway sleepers she needs. It is to be hoped that that day will dawn before the ruin of the fine old yellow-wood forests of the Knysna has been accomplished—for yellow-wood makes the worst and most perishable railway sleepers in the world, while, as the old Dutch builders have shown us, nothing is more solid or beautiful when used indoors for floors and ceilings. Wisely directed afforestation may help to preserve the native trees by providing a substitute for them and thus arresting their destruction.

Van Riebeeck, who was keenly interested in the forest which he found on the way to Hout Bay, published the following Placcaat on October 12, 1658 :

‘Whereas yellow-wood, the most serviceable for planks and the scarcest in the Cape forests, is cut down and destroyed by everybody . . . the yellow-wood should be economized for planks.’

There is a fine vigour in the old Placcaaten dealing with trees. Van Riebeeck threatened any one who should break off ‘even the smallest twig’ from his hedge of bitter wild almond—the *wilde amandelboom* (*Brabeium stellatifolium*)—with the penalty of being ‘banished in chains *ad opus publicum* for three years, with confiscation of 100 reals of eight, of which the informer, with concealment of his name, shall enjoy 6 reals.’ Portions of this hedge still remain above Bishopscourt. The punishments threatened by the van der Stels for damaging the young plantations were even more drastic.

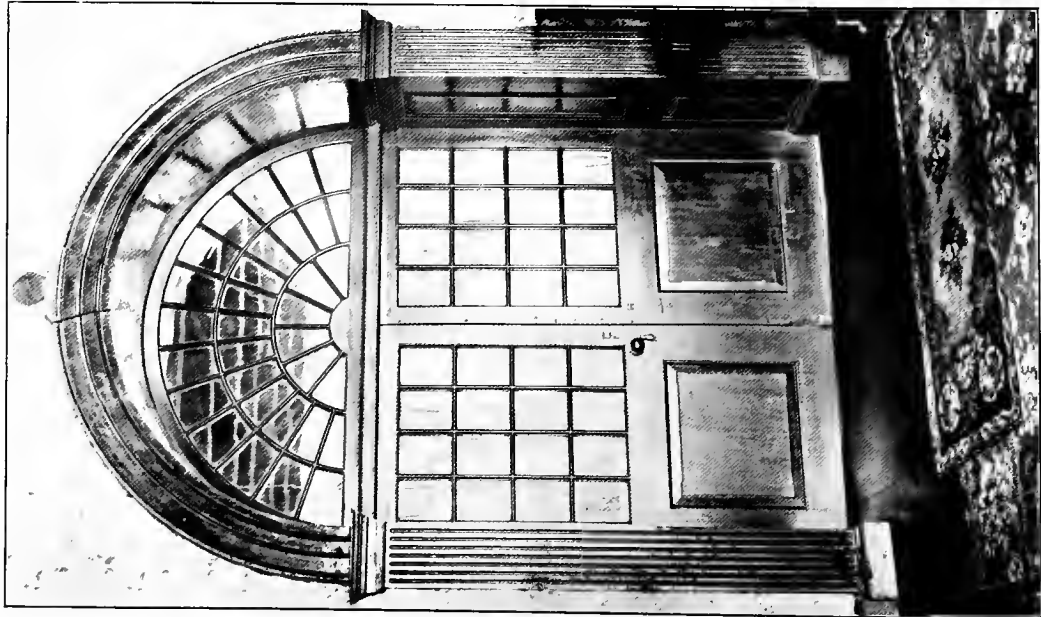
Not far off is the homestead of Zwaanswyk, now called Steenberg, one of the earliest existing Cape houses, on the land granted to Catharina Ras in 1682. Here she built herself a modest dwelling, with a gable of severe simplicity, under the shade of the oaks which even then were of a considerable size, for they are shown on the earliest plans of the estate. And she called the little house Zwaanswyk—the ward of the swans. Perhaps she had brought with her from Europe some lingering, tender association with the name—the senti-



WELTEVREDEN



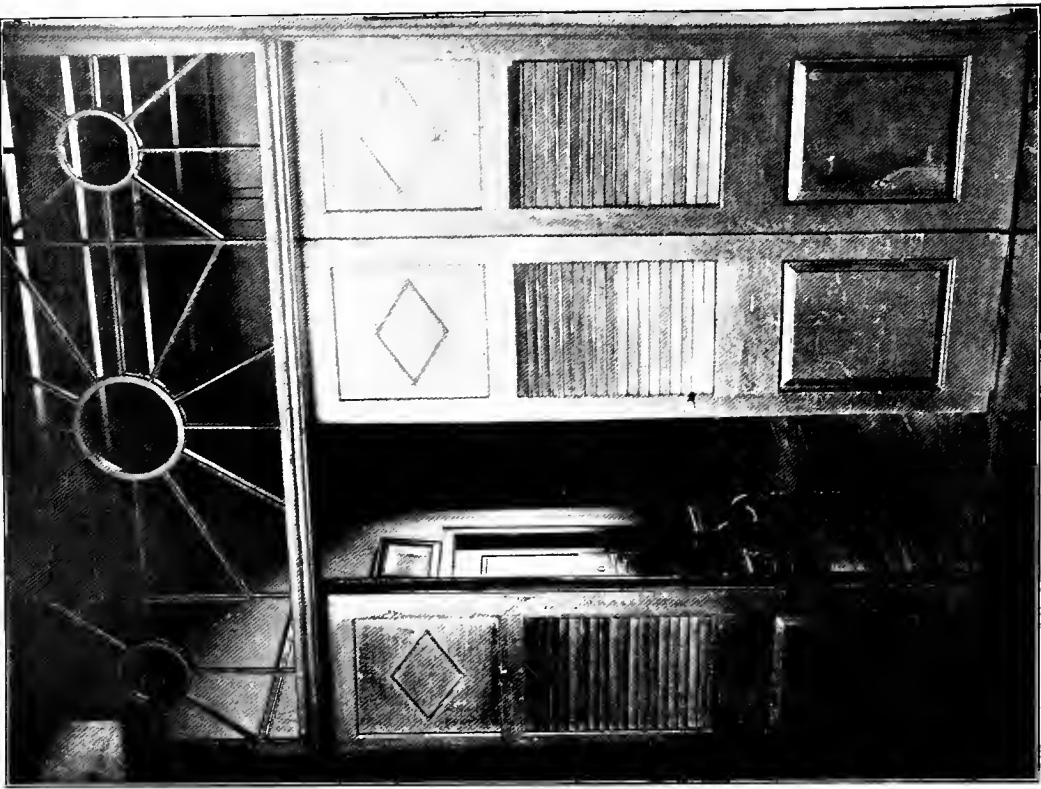
LOGGIA OF A HOUSE AT MUIZENBERG



INNER DOOR AT KRONENDAL



DOOR AT ZWAANSWYK



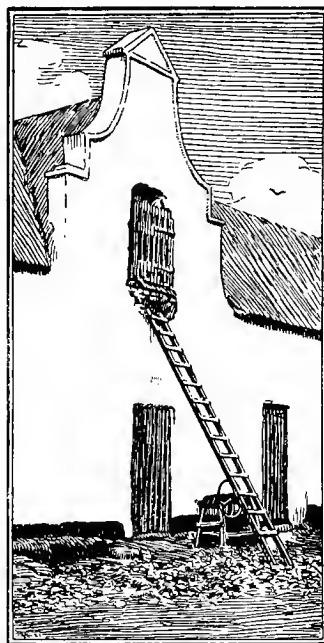
SCREEN AT IMHOFF'S GIFT

ment which sometimes moves dwellers under the shadow of Table Mountain to call their villas The Elms, or Chatsworth, or Southsea Cottage. Perhaps the herons which to this day haunt the vleis in the neighbourhood pleased her fancy and recalled the swans of her northern youth. To-day the farm is known as Steenberg.

Here Catharina Ras lived, with Simon van der Stel as a neighbour, and here Nicholaas Oortman wooed her daughter and built himself the present homestead, within a stone's throw of her gabled cottage. The house is much as he left it in 1717, save for a corrugated iron verandah. After his death it passed to his daughter, who married Frédéric Rousseau, a Huguenot; their daughter married a Louw, and to the Louws it belongs to this day. The house itself is simple and dignified—always making allowance for the verandah. The stoep is paved with narrow tiles which show wonderfully little trace of the innumerable feet which have paced them. To enter you push up the sash window over the half-door and pass in under a charming fanlight. Within is the square hall or voorhuis, separated by a fine old screen of yellow-wood and stink-wood from the large room beyond. The middle portion of the screen has glass panels, not unlike those in a Chippendale cabinet; the sides are louvred, and the whole can be unbolted and pushed back to form one great apartment.

Here in the old days the neighbourhood may possibly have gathered for church and undoubtedly collected for festivities—when the gardens were illuminated by candles in tall glass punkah-shades. It is easy to picture the guests in powder and brocade as you stand in the old hall, with its ceiling and polished floor of iron-wood, its doors of the same woods as the screen, its heavy teak windows with glass to which age and weather have given an iridescent sheen. On one of the panes you may read the inscription: 'F. N. Leappe, Capitain van de Artillerie en Jongeman mit het schip Duyvenburg. Anno 1763 den 8 December. En Ivan Asbeek, Luytenant van de Artillerie.'

In one of the ancient oaks hangs an ancient slave-bell—so old that all trace of its history is lost, but it may well have sounded across the wide Flats in the days when Charles the Second was King of England and Catharina Ras lived at Zwaanswyk. There is a sundial near by,



EARLY GABLE
ZWAANSWYK

dated 1756. Wrapped in the foliage of its old trees—so worn that many of them are but the shells of oaks—the curved white gables gleam through the green, the sun lights up the brown thatch roof, and glinted, as we talked, on the white head of the courtly old man who held the land his fathers had held before a stone of Petrograd was laid.

A neighbour of Zwaanswyk is Bergvliet, another old Eksteen homestead, built on land which was once owned by Simon van der Stel. Here the late owner, Dr. Purcell, gathered together much of the fine old furniture which has vanished from many of the houses. He was very learned in this and other matters, and his recent death is a heavy loss to the country.

Over the Steenberg mountains lies Hout Bay, where there is an old house, Kronendal, on the land granted in 1681 to W. van Dieden and P. van der Westhuizen. A road from this bay winds between mountain and sea to Noord Hoek, which with the neighbouring Imhoff's Gift was granted in 1743 to Christina Rousseau by order of Governor-General van Imhoff.

Close to the south end of Constantia Valley lies False Bay, the nearest point being Muizenberg, where batteries were thrown up in 1795 to protect the Cape against the British fleet. These proved useless against the heavier guns of the ships, which the resourceful English sailors ran close in to the shore, mounted on small launches. On the way to Muizenberg the road passes Mrs. Cavenagh's charming little old house of Weltevreden. Farther on is the thatched cottage in which Cecil Rhodes died, and next to it the beautiful house built by Mr. Herbert Baker for Sir Abe Bailey, with a lovely garden. On the southern shores of the bay lies Simonstown, so named by Simon van der Stel, and the little station founded by van Imhoff in 1743. A long row of store-houses was built and a garden planted for growing vegetables for the fleets. Oaklands, this garden is called to-day, and the Company's house is still standing. A Residency was also built and a hospital. In 1814, when the English naval station was transferred to Simon's Bay, a farm, which had originally been granted to the Burgher Anthony Visser, was bought from the widow Hurter and the present Admiralty House was built.

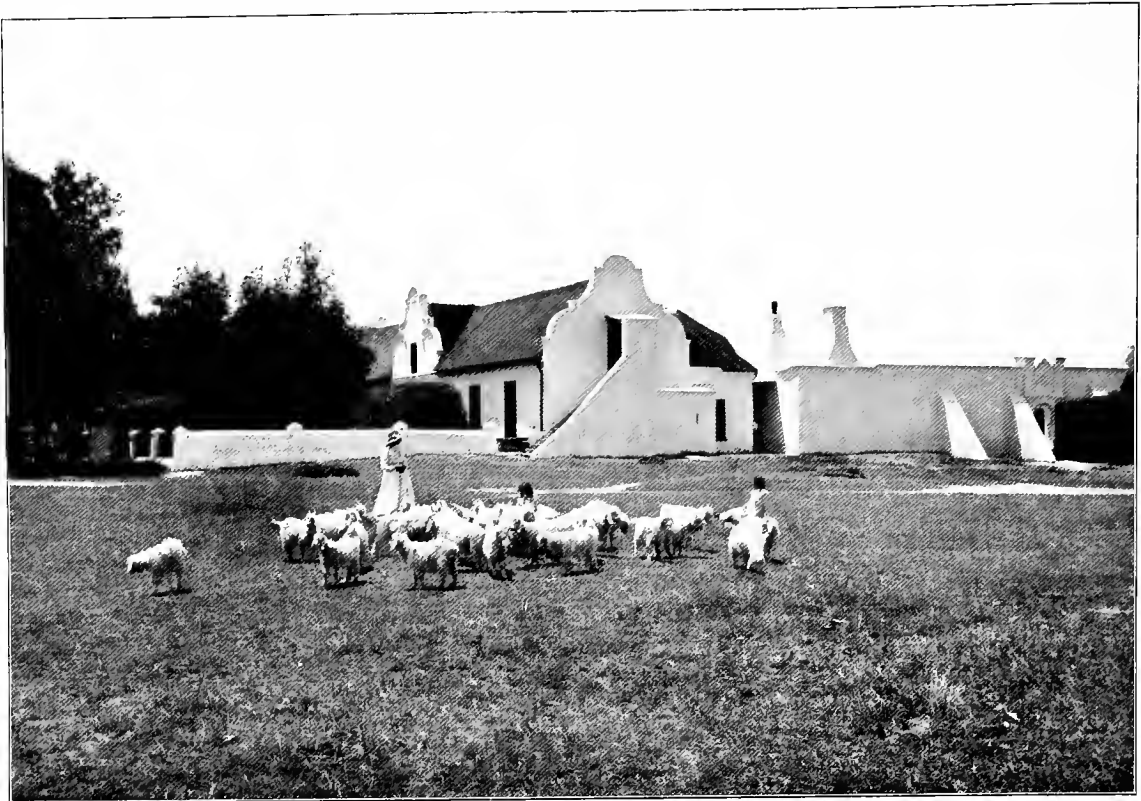
Still farther southward you may go, until you come to Cape Point, along a glorious road with the blue sea below you, while the mountains that thrust out into it are every tint of green and grey, rose-madder, and burnt umber. And here you may look across the ocean—across the rock that marks where Diaz lies—to where the Southern Cross hangs high in the heavens above the cold stillness of the Antarctic, and the graves of the very gallant gentlemen who carried the flag of England to the utmost limits of earth and sea.



VAULT AT MEERLUST



THE HEN-HOUSE, MEERLUST



VERGENOEGD



OLD BUILDING, ZANDVLIET

IX

ON THE EERSTE RIVER

‘**T**HEY would likewise have seen plainly, as all of them would be obliged to confess, that, among others, the house of Jan Blesius, Independent Fiscal at the Cape, and the house of Henning Huysing, the chief mover among the subscribers [to the accusation], were in all respects much larger, higher, and grander than van der Stel’s house. Notwithstanding that the same Henning, a Hamburger by birth, had arrived at the Cape as a most insignificant personage, and for some years had been there as a poor shepherd.’

These words are from the Defence of Willem Adriaan van der Stel. We have noted the house of Fiscal Blesius, Leeuwenhof, above Cape Town, and the description applies with equal truth to the Fiscal’s country homestead of Simon’s Vallei near Klapmuts. Huysing, who had described the Governor’s modest homestead of Vergelegen as a palace, and his grant of four hundred morgen as ‘as much land as would suffice for the support of at least fifty farmers’, had himself received various grants amounting to a total of five hundred and forty-five morgen on the Eerste River, on which he had built the fine house of Meerlust. He also owned grazing-land at Groen Kloof and more than one large property in Cape Town, including two solid blocks in Strand Street.

There must have been moments when Henning Huysing found it difficult to believe that he had ever been the humble shepherd of Hamburg. He was a man of considerable shrewdness and business capacity. We read of him as the owner of ‘more than 20,000 sheep and 1,000 head of cattle’, and in 1685 the Lord of Mydrecht, as Commissioner for the Batavian Government, granted to him the contract for the retail sale of meat. From this time onward he prospered, until he had become the richest man at the Cape, wealthy enough to build the fine house of Meerlust on the land which had been granted to him—by a curious irony of fate—by Willem Adriaan van der Stel in 1701.

The neighbouring homestead of Welmoed lies on this land, and it is possible that the older buildings of the farm were his residence while Meerlust was being built. We find in the records that in

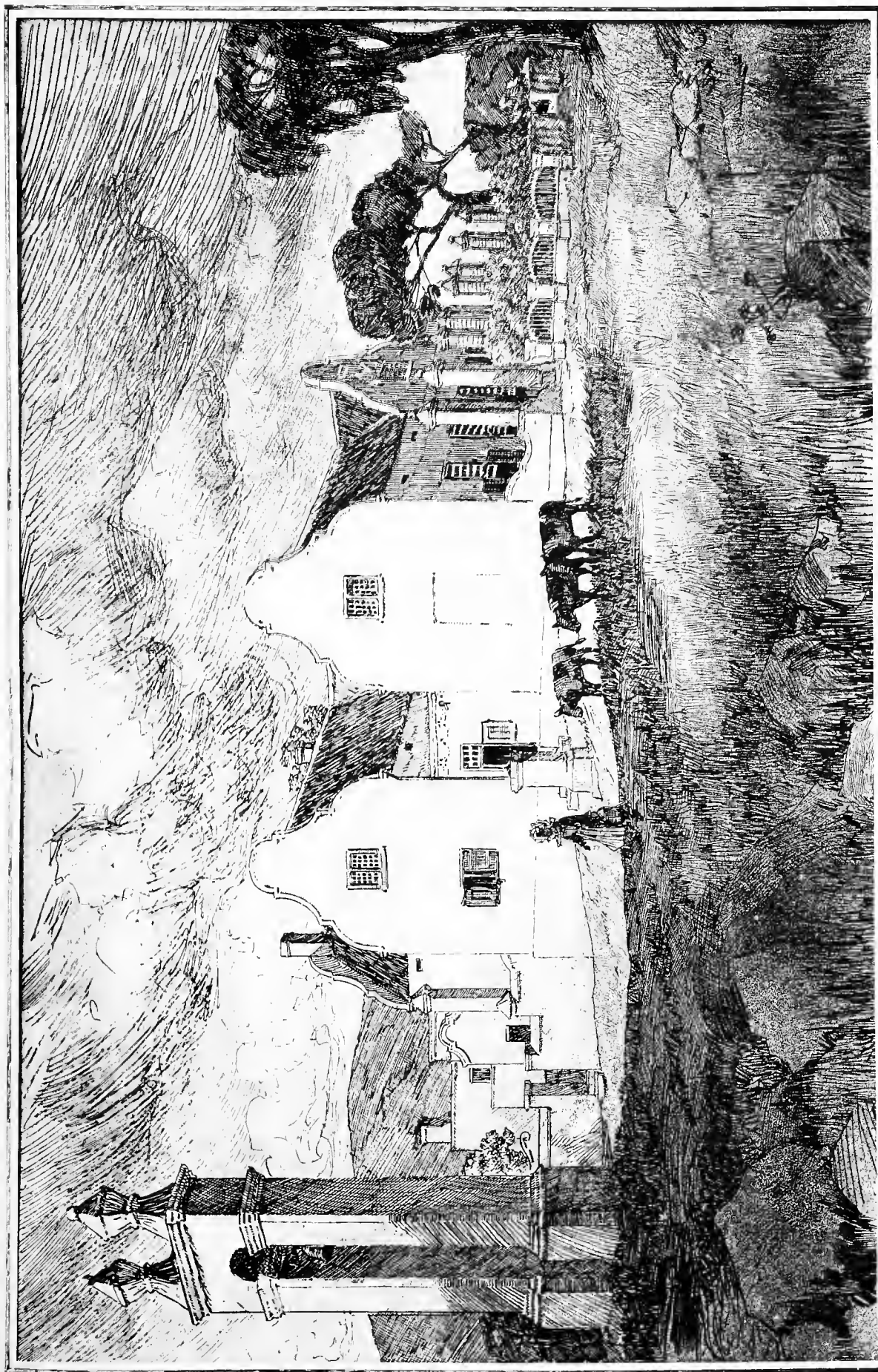
June 1700 he made a purchase of timber from the Government, probably for the fine yellow-wood ceilings and floors which Meerlust possesses to this day, and from that date to the end of 1702 there are many entries of wood supplied to him, including teak for the doors, wall-cupboards, and shutters.

The plan of Meerlust is a variation on the **H**-type, owing to the great size and number of its rooms. It has a large entrance hall, paved with square red tiles, and lofty rooms open off it on either side. Behind it is the long, wide dining-room, placed across the top of the hall, as at Groot Constantia, and there are charming carved wall-cupboards and a curious fireplace with curved doors of teak and a fresco painting on the wall above. On one of the old panes of glass in this room is written, apparently with a diamond, 'Pieterella Heymond, 1725.'

Despite the corrugated-iron roof, a disadvantage under which it rests for the moment, Meerlust possesses much of its original dignity. The gable over the entrance bears the date of 1776, but this is no indication that it was not built with the house, for it has long been the inconvenient custom of Cape masons and owners to replace the early date by that of a 'doing up' of the house. Nor is the style any clue to the age of the gables, for, as we know, both pointed and square-headed gables were common in Holland at the time of the founding of the Colony of the Cape.

Meerlust has unusually fine out-buildings, with elaborate decorations in plaster-work. The pigeon-house and wine cellar, the graceful stairs leading to lofts, the dignified old bell-tower—all these things testify that Meerlust was no ordinary house, but the best that the butcher-contractor's long purse could build, and truly 'much larger, higher, and grander' than van der Stel's neighbouring Vergelegen.

Huysing was a wine-farmer as well as a butcher-contractor, and in both directions he speedily fell foul of the new Governor when Willem Adriaan van der Stel succeeded his father in 1699. Van der Stel desired to see the Cape a wool-producing country, and did his utmost to persuade the farmers to breed wool-bearing sheep, instead of the fat-tailed half-breeds which were certainly more profitable as mutton. In March 1706 he wrote to the Seventeen in Holland, asking for 'some Spanish or other fine-wooled sheep', adding that 'all sheep-owners, in spite of the admonitions of the Governor and every effort made by him, could not be persuaded to breed wool sheep for shearing, because they will not take the trouble—some being animated with a wrong zeal, and others inclined to a lazy and do-nothing life,



From a drawing by G. S. Smitthard

MEERLUST

caring little for the interests of the Company. The half-breed sheep are the biggest and heaviest, and bring in the most profit, but only produce hair and no wool.'

It is easy to believe that these sentiments were not popular with Huysing, the butcher-contractor, and those who made their living by the happy-go-lucky rearing of half-breeds. The restrictions on the retail sale of wine were another source of discontent—necessary as they were both in the interests of the Company and of the slaves and hired Hottentots. A conspiracy against the Governor was organized by Huysing, with his wife's nephew Adam Tas and other farmers; van der Stel was represented to the Seventeen as an unjust, tyrannical official, and, despite the protest in his favour made by the majority of the burghers, he was recalled, while Huysing remained in wealth and prosperity at beautiful Meerlust.

Perhaps his wife was his Nemesis. Her name was Maria Lindenhof, and she had been a servant in the employ of the van der Stels before her marriage with the man who was to rise to such great wealth and power. In the troubled times which followed on the recall of van der Stel she took a lively share. Being present when the eccentric Minister le Boucq abused the Administrator she was 'civilly required', say the records, 'to testify to the truth of what she had seen and heard.' This she refused to do, alleging that she had forgotten the conversation, whereon the Government imprisoned her in the Castle at her own expense, in the hope of refreshing her memory, while 'the chaste Mrs. Maria Engebregt, whose virtue and godliness are irreproachable', came forward to testify that she had been with Mrs. Huysing on the occasion in question and had heard the libels and slanders uttered. Mrs. Huysing, however, continued to assert that she had forgotten the occurrence, and her friends got up a petition 'filled with very tart, libellous, and hateful expressions towards this Government, and moreover bristling with vile falsehoods', say the records ruefully. In the end Mrs. Huysing was released, and the story is only worth telling as a sidelight on the difficulties of Cape life two hundred years ago.

Meerlust, however, has pleasant associations, unconnected with the Huysings. For eight generations it has been in the possession of the Myburgh family, and Lady Anne Barnard, who spent a night there in 1798, has left on record the excellent dinner that Mevrouw Myburgh gave her; Burchell also speaks of having dined there 'with an opulent farmer named Meyburg'. Here, too, General Janssens took refuge in great bitterness of soul after the battle of Blaauwberg, when the Wurtemberg Regiment under his command had rendered

a difficult task impossible by running away from the English troops ; and down the steps behind the house, tradition says, he kicked the two officers of the regiment who had come to apologize.

Behind the homestead the ground falls to the Eerste River and to magnificent vineyards and oak plantations. Near by was the ' Company's Drift ', and the solid stonework of the early bridge built by the younger van der Stel still remains. Across the river was Geduld, the homestead of Huysing's ally Ferdinand Appel, since destroyed by fire ; farther on lived another of the coterie, Wessel Pretorius of Berg Sinai, and across the road Adam Tas's sister, Sarah, owned a homestead with the pleasant name of Vogelgezang—the song of the birds.

Nearer to the sea lies Zandvliet, the farm of Petrus Kalden, Minister of the Dutch Reformed Church in Cape Town during the time of the younger van der Stel ; it was granted to him in 1699. He was a kindly and learned man, zealous in his sacred profession, but a friend of the Governor and therefore a mark for the dislike of the Huysing faction, who procured his recall. It was owing to his energetic representations that the once-beautiful church in the Heerengracht was built, and in the midst of van der Stel's own troubles he found time to petition the Seventeen in favour of ' this very worthy minister '. Still stronger is the testimony of the Church Council, who never ' knew him otherwise than as a man of an upright, pious, and God-fearing life and conduct, a lover of study and zealous in the same, and the preaching of God's Holy and Saving Word '. But no testimony weighed with the Seventeen against the crafty misrepresentations of Tas and Huysing, and Kalden shared his chief's exile. Of his homestead little was left by the fire which destroyed the main building some years ago, but there are lovely gables on some of the old out-houses.

Moslem pilgrims assemble at Zandvliet every Easter, for in a small mosque on the summit of a kopje on the farm sleeps Sheikh Yussuf, the Macassar noble and saint who was exiled by the Batavian Government and died, in 1699, in one of the small stone houses now falling to decay at the foot of the kopje. There were many political exiles sent to the Cape from the East in the early days of the Company, and doubtless, in the crowd who picnic and worship with equal decorum, are descendants of the rajahs and princelings who broke their hearts in exile two hundred years ago, as well as of the slaves who were sent from Batavia and Ceylon.

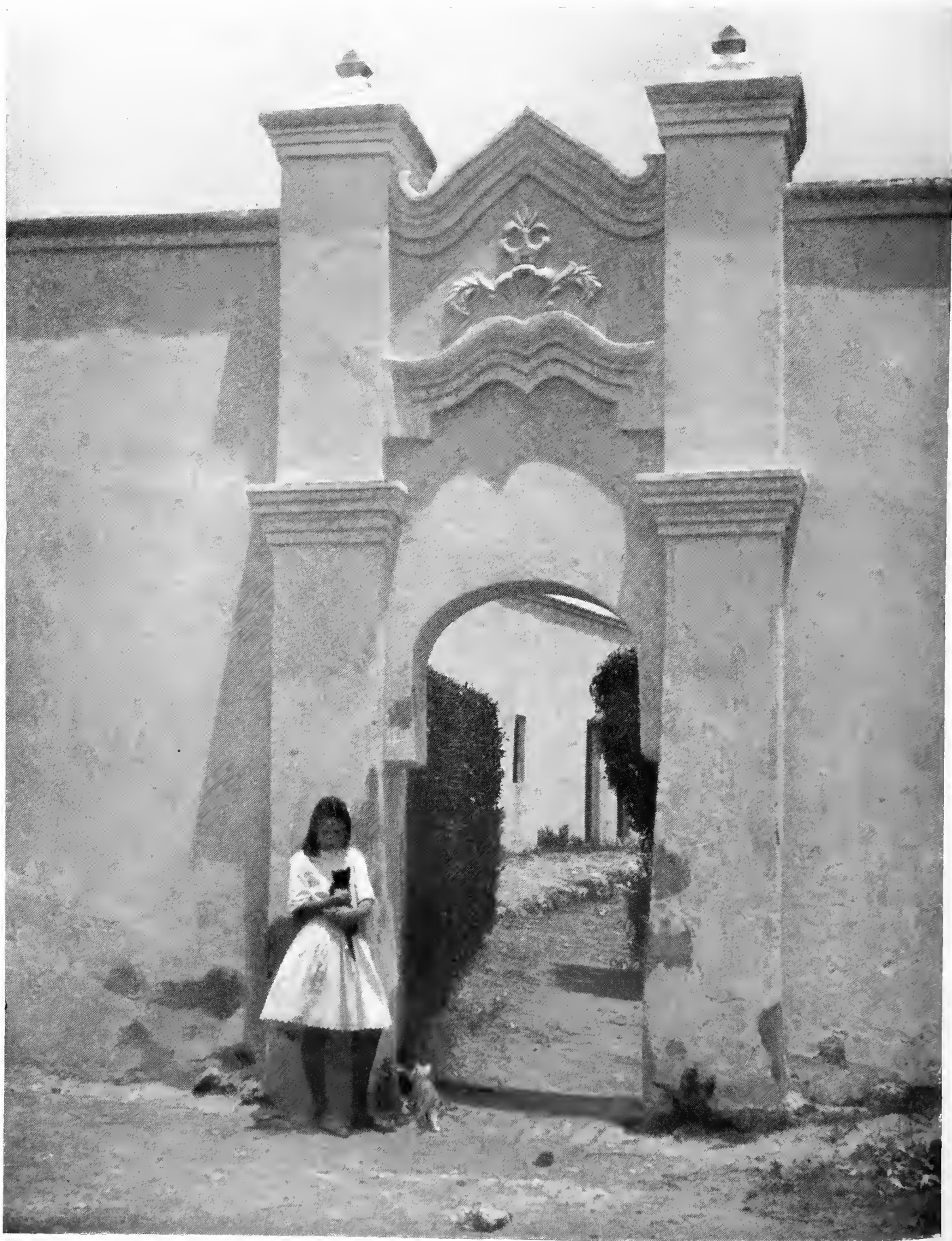
I sat on the low stone wall outside the little mosque one Friday morning, and watched the worshippers pass in and out with bent



WINE-CELLAR AT VERGELEGEN



VAN DER STEL'S TREES AT VERGELEGEN



GATEWAY AT VERGENOEGD

heads and folded hands. In their long white robes—for none should pray to Allah in gay raiment—there was something unearthly about the silent figures, and it seemed incredible that they were the Malays of the fish-carts and cabs.

Between Zandvliet and Meerlust is Mr. Faure's homestead of Vergenoegd, on the land granted to Johannes Nicolaas Colyn in 1778, though the land was evidently held on loan earlier, as the date on the front gable is 1773. Vergenoegd has a gateway of unusual beauty, which must have been made for the sheer delight in lovely things which inspired so many of the old builders. It has fine lines, and is more suggestive of the entrance to a Spanish convent than the backyard of a Cape farm.

The house of Huysing and its neighbours are set in a fair country. In his days of wealth and prosperity, did no remorse rise in his heart when he sat on his stoep and looked across the Flats to Table Mountain, dark against the sunset, and thought of the men whom he had driven from its shelter to ruin and exile? Only the Recording Angel can tell—all that we know is that he died in the full tide of prosperity and was buried with pomp and circumstance in the Groote Kerk of Petrus Kalden and van der Stel.

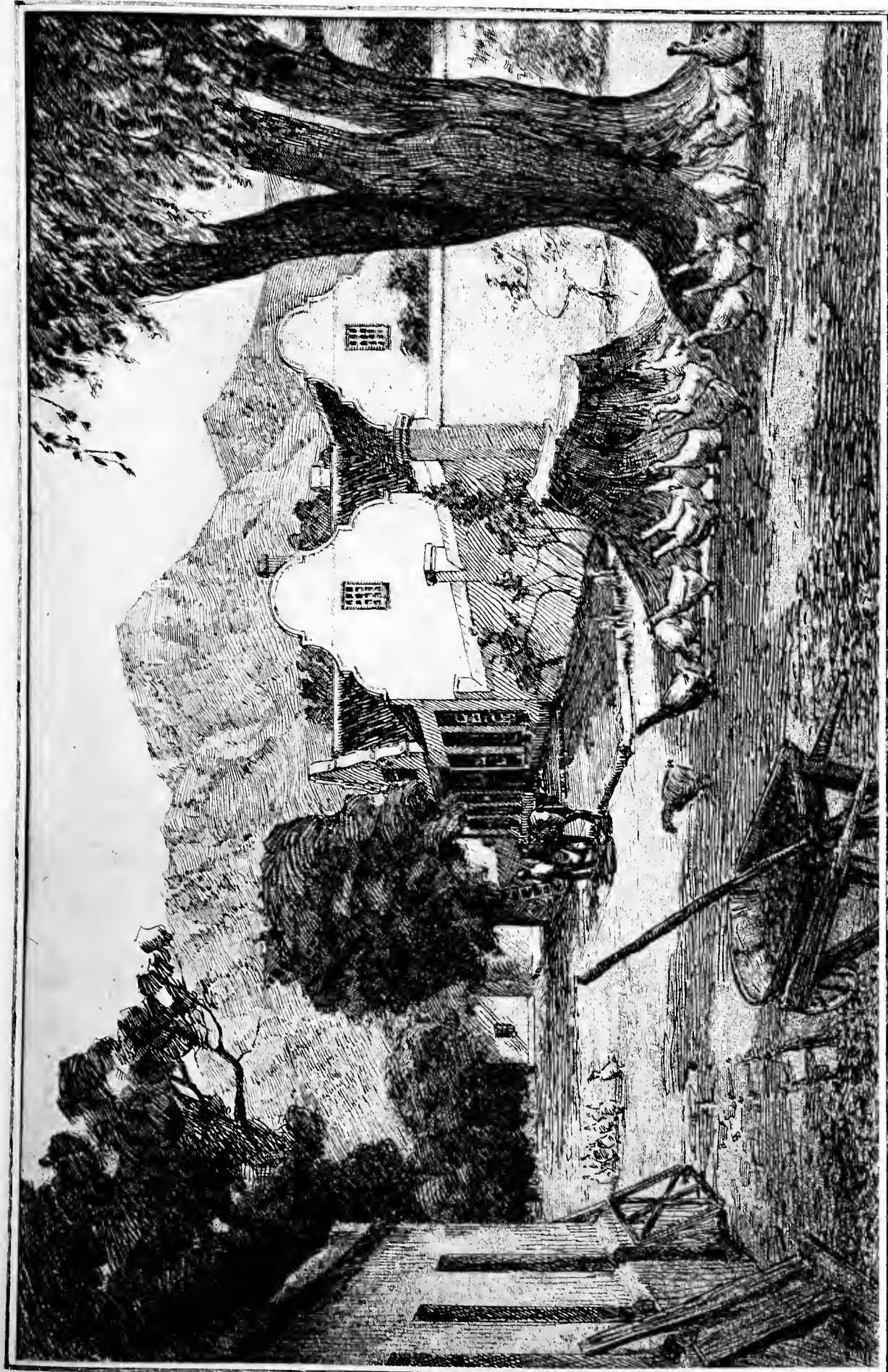
X

VERGELEGEN AND ITS NEIGHBOURS

THE man who first owned Vergelegen wrote of it as a place in a sweet and pleasant climate, and we of two centuries later can only echo his words. Set in between the hills, in a fair and rich valley ; deep in the shade of its ancient oaks and camphor trees ; watered by a never-failing brown trout-stream—over all broods an indefinable sense of mellow beauty and an air of detachment from the hurry and worry of modern life.

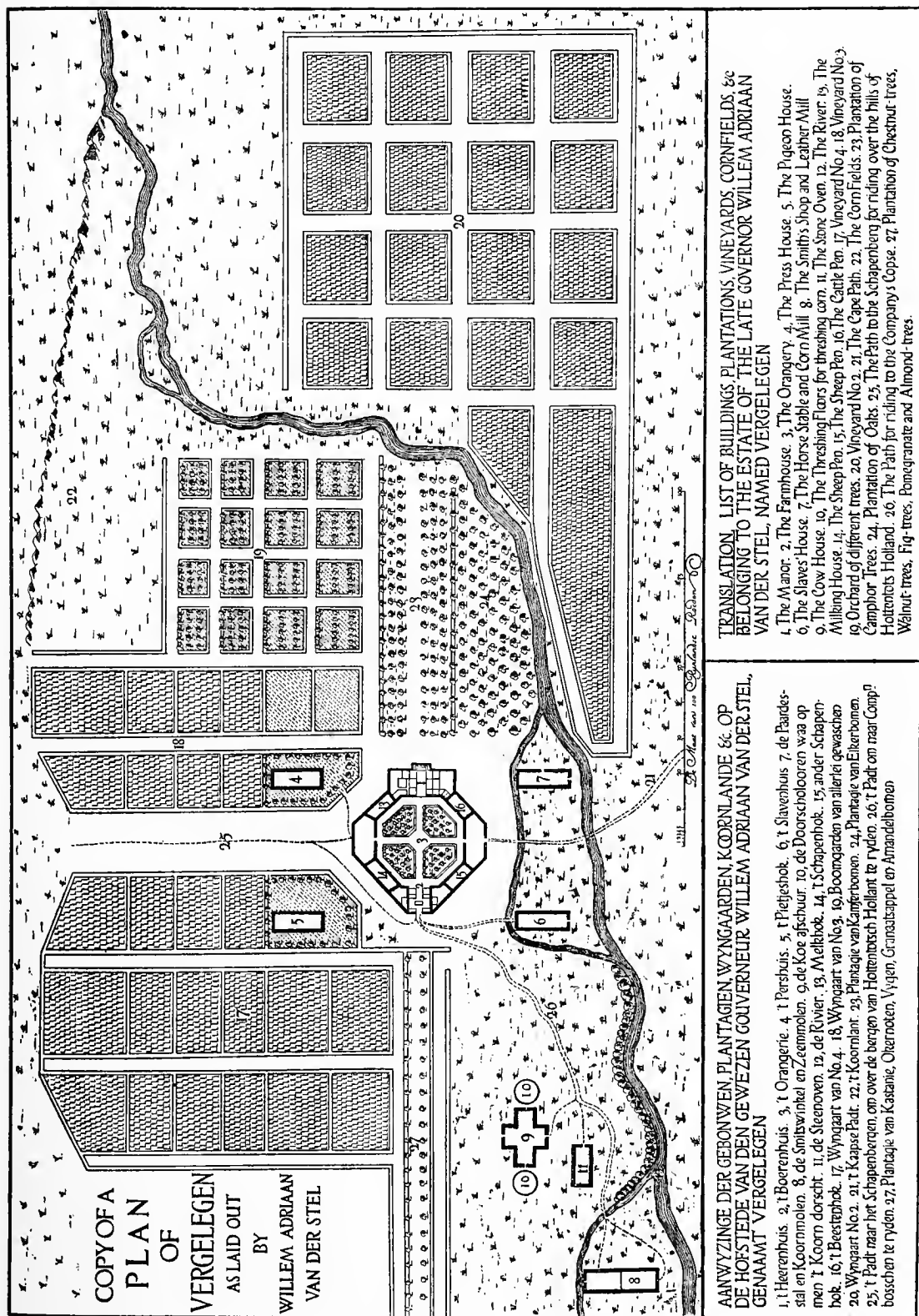
Vergelegen, as every one who is interested in Cape history knows, was granted to Governor Willem Adriaan van der Stel by Wouter Valkenier in February 1700. Valkenier was the Commissioner of the Dutch East Indies, who, being entrusted with full powers, visited the Cape at that time on the annual visit of inspection. It was granted ' as a hereditary possession, with liberty to sell, let, plant and sow on the same, and also to build on it as he liked '. It was by no means the first grant of land to be made to an official. Jan van Riebeeck, for example, owned Boscheuval (now Bishops court), one of the richest and most fertile farms in the country. A little later, Commander Cornelis van Quaelbergen became possessed of Concordia, a valuable tract of land in Table Valley, upon which the present Good Hope Hall stands. The Secunde Andries de Man was the seventeenth-century owner of the Hofmeyr property in Camp Street, and in 1685 Commissioner van Rheede, the Lord of Mydrecht, gave to Simon van der Stel the 891 morgen of land on which he built his homestead of Groot Constantia. The Dutch East India Company granted land very freely in the early days of the settlement, but the land of Vergelegen was only 400 morgen in extent, a smaller grant than that made to many of the settlers.

If small, it was of singular beauty. To-day the homestead stands deep in the shelter of great trees, and you may walk for long distances down cool green alleys with the hot sun beating in vain on the leafy roof above your head. But when van der Stel first looked on the valley, and all his heart went out to it, he saw only the wild veld jewelled with flowers, the stream that sang and chuckled over the rounded stones, the finches and bokmakeries, and the jewelled



From a drawing by G. S. Smithard

VERGELEGEN

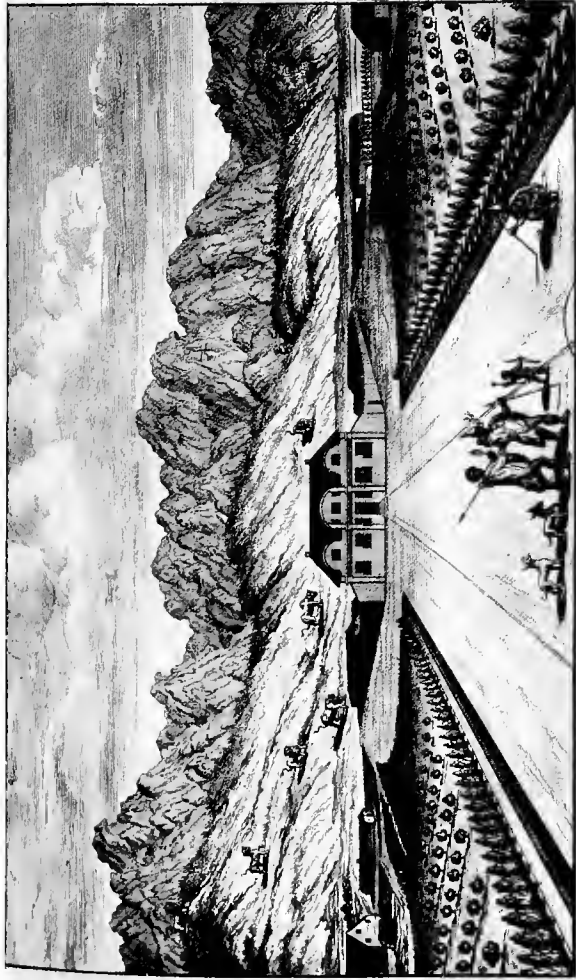


sugar-birds that hovered over the proteas, the Guardian Peak and all the blue mountains that lie between the life of cities and this 'most sweet and pleasant spot'. Even the little Hottentots who were dispossessed by the white men had felt its singular charm, for they told the early explorers who boasted to them of Holland that this was *their* Holland—meaning the loveliest place on earth.

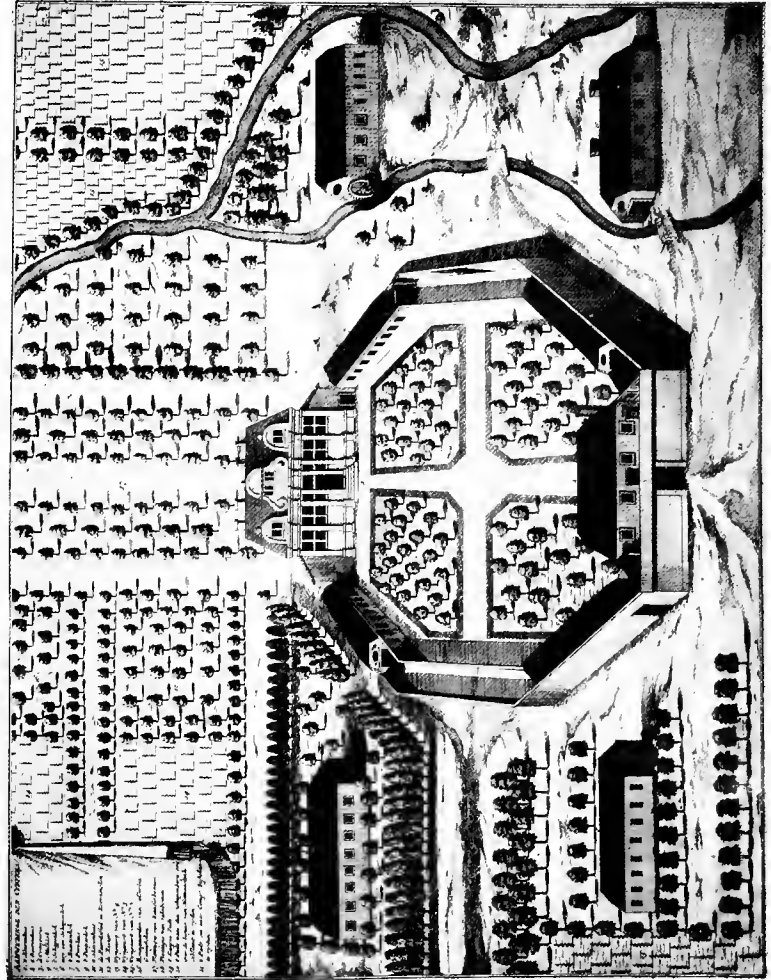
But for all his sense of its beauty, van der Stel was no mere idealist, but a very practical farmer and gardener. Vergelegen the beloved—the Far Off—was not only a pleasant place, but one in which he had the opportunity of putting into practice the knowledge of agriculture which he has left to us in the manuscript now in the South African Public Library. It was published in the African Court Calendar for 1825 as a number of *The African Gardeners' and Agriculturists' Calendar*, and it leaves one amazed at the versatility of the writer's knowledge concerning fruit-growing, cattle-rearing, vines, vegetables, trees, and flowers. He had a vigorous faith in the future of the country, and saw clearly that the future must be based on work and knowledge if it were to fulfil its golden promise.

Not unnaturally—when we remember that the Dutch East India Company's object in forming a settlement at the Cape was to ensure a supply of fresh water, meat, and green stuff for the passing fleets in those scurvy-stricken days—vegetables fill a large space in these directions. It is illuminating, though not edifying, to contrast the long list of these that were evidently grown freely by van der Stel with the costliness of all vegetables mentioned by writers a century later, when the divine spark of enthusiasm for the land was dying down as the once-great Company tottered to its fall.

Cabbages take a prominent place, being largely in demand for the ships on their way to and from the East. He is as insistent on their value as van Riebeeck was. But he is also enthusiastic over French beans, turnips, radishes, celery, leeks, cauliflowers, cucumbers, Turkey beans, carrots, parsnips, brown lettuce, endive, spinach, chervil, onions, lentils, peas, potatoes, coriander, artichokes, beet, and so forth—an endless list of them, as many as you would find at Covent Garden on a summer morning. He was also interested, as van Riebeeck was, in the wild vegetables of the country, and he suggests digging up roots of the wild asparagus and cultivating them on new land. The anise-wortel, still eaten in the country districts, also received attention from him. In the midst of so much that was practical it is quaint to find him gravely telling us that we should plant our peas and carrots with a full moon, and endive and parsnips when the moon is waning.



VERGELEGEN, LOOKING NORTH
From the Defence of Willem Adriaan van der Stel



VERGELEGEN, LOOKING SOUTH
From the Accusation



GABLE ON WINE-CELLAR, VERGELEGEN



PIGEON-HOUSE AT THE BUSH—FORMERLY ONVERWACHT



GATEWAY AT PAREL VALLEI

Evidently he was successful in the culture of tulips—so rarely seen at the Cape to-day. ‘The land should be well manured,’ he writes, ‘and the holes into which the bulbs are to be placed must be half filled with white river-sand.’ He also writes of bulbs from Ceylon, and we know from the records that large quantities of Cape bulbs and other plants were sent to Holland by both the van der Stels. Perhaps some of the gladioli and ixias which are the glory of Dutch florists to-day are the descendants of those which van der Stel gathered in the valley of Vergelegen. The diseases of fruit trees are also dealt with by him, and though one sorrows to think that he was not acquainted with the virtues of our modern remedies against scale on orange trees—he calls it scab—one feels that he was spared the myriads of pests that have come to us with new varieties and the small black Argentine ant. At least he could eat his figs in peace.

In one of van der Stel’s letters to the Seventeen in Holland he speaks of the introduction of the white mulberry in order that the leaves might provide food for the silk-worms which he brought to the Cape—a silk industry being one of his plans for the future. It is of interest to-day to see a large-leaved mulberry tree growing close to the house at Vergelegen, perhaps an offshoot of one of the trees which he planted with such high hopes.

The homestead, as built by van der Stel, was as follows—the description is that of the Commissioners from the Court of Justice who examined it in 1706, and made a sworn declaration to this effect :

‘A dwelling-house one story high, level with the ground, containing six rooms or apartments, and a flat roof for the kitchen—five small closets or gardes de robes under flat or sloping roofs, and a small provision cellar with a small room—all level with the ground, without other apartments or stores. A house for the mason with two rooms, and a front room with two small rooms under the sheds, and a yard with sheds. Three sheep and cattle pens and another bit of one. A room for a wine-press. Another for the slaves. Another for the horses and mules. And two small rooms for work and storing the tools—and that on the whole land there no other buildings stand or are found, the rest consisting of orchards, vines, plantations, and wilderness.

‘The above they have seen and found as stated, and to confirm their statement all repeat the solemn words, “So truly help me, God Almighty.”’

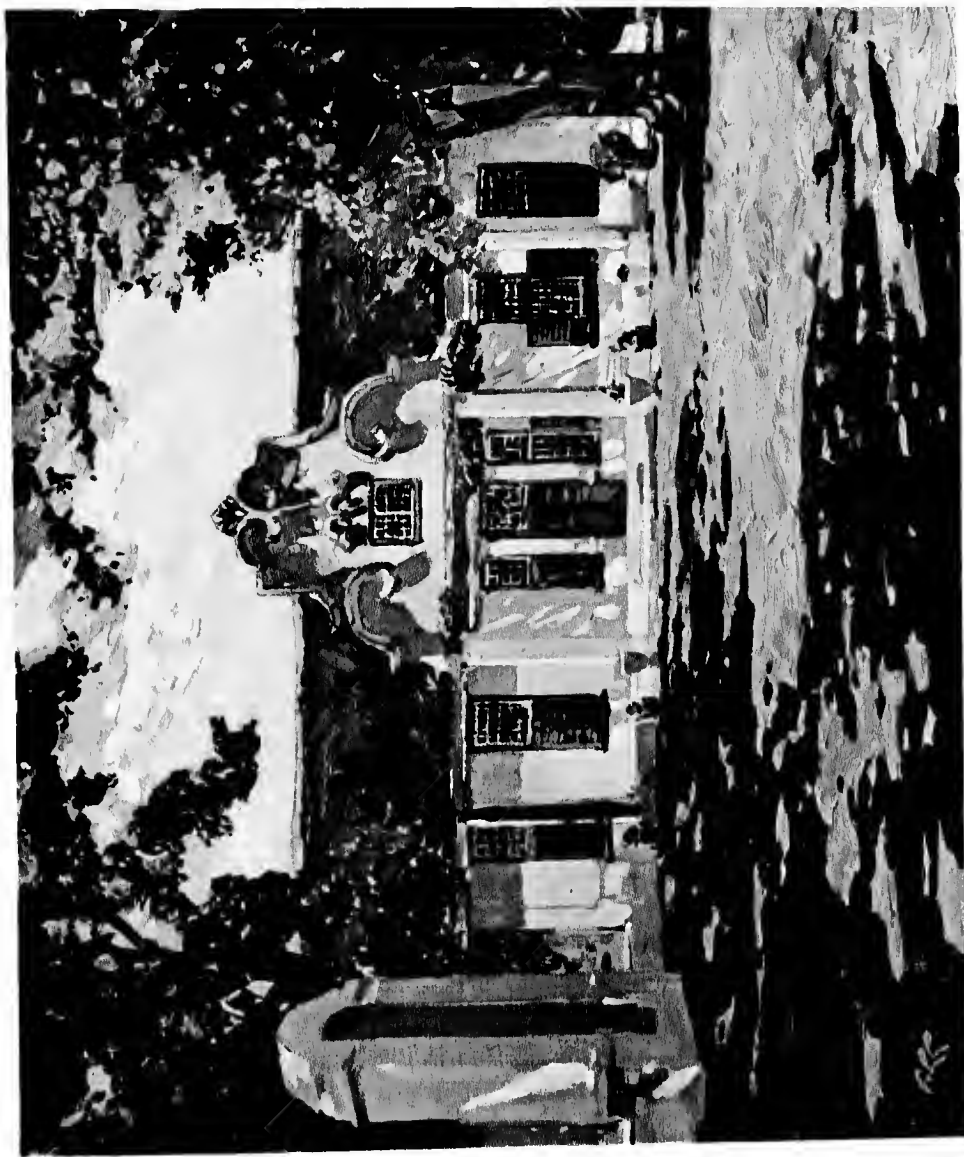
Then follow the signatures—the Sieur Willem ten Damme (chief surgeon), David Vieravond, Jan Vosloo, Jan Hartog, and others, all reputable citizens.

It is interesting to compare this description with the old drawing shown and to note how far the original house differed from the Vergelegen of to-day. How it happens that there has been an altera-

tion is a well-known story, so it need not be dwelt upon at length. Briefly, one of the main charges against van der Stel was that Vergelegen was a palace, and that fifty farmers might make their living off the land. The Directors of the Company, alarmed at any suggestion of expansion in a country which to them was only a provision-station, recalled van der Stel, and ordered that Vergelegen should be broken down, as setting an example of 'ostentation'. When we think of the great rooms of Meerlust a few miles away this would be almost funny—if mirth were not lost in the sense of tragedy. For van der Stel's heart was in the country, above all at Vergelegen; his father was spending an honoured old age at Constantia, and he too looked to sleep his last sleep in this 'sweet and pleasant' place. He prayed to be allowed to remain 'as a forgotten burgher', but he was curtly ordered to leave, and Vergelegen was sold to two members of Huysing's cabal, Jacobus van der Heyden and his cousin.

It is difficult to believe that these two worthies allowed the work of destruction to proceed very far. There would have been no object in destroying the house merely to build another of the same size on the same foundations—for the old plan shows us that it occupied the exact site in the octagonal wall that it fills to-day. No doubt a fine show of carrying out the orders was made, and indeed the gables of to-day differ sufficiently from those of the first house to suggest that they were broken down and afterwards rebuilt—probably immediately afterwards.

The great oaks and camphors of Vergelegen can only have been small saplings when van der Stel looked his last on them. It is easy to picture the delight with which he must have shown his young plantations to his neighbours, and how his brother Frans would ride over from Parel Vallei and the Reverend Pieter Kalden from Zandvliet, or the Secunde Elsevier from Elsenburg, to compare notes on their farming, and on the fair prospect of working for the future of the land that lay before them. We know how all these hopes were blighted and how the three friends shared van der Stel's sentence of banishment—apparently because they were his friends. It is less pleasant to think of Vergelegen a few years later. If trees could speak, the oaks that are old to-day could tell us of the chuckles of satisfaction with which the cabal must have met there. The wealthy butcher-contractor Huysing and his shrewish wife; Adam Tas, the lazy, tippling creature revealed by his own diary; Ferdinand Appel, newly possessed of the Hot Baths (now Caledon); van der Heyden and the rest of them. How often in the grey years that were left to him must van der Stel's thoughts have sped back across the sea to his vineyards and orchards,



MORGENSTER

From the oil-painting by R. Gwelo Goodman

his young forest trees, and the sheep that were to lead the way in making of South Africa the finest wool-producing country in the world, as he saw it in his dreams.

For many years Vergelegen has rested undeveloped, but South Africa has reason to be thankful that it has now become the property of Lady Phillips, under whose discriminating care and knowledge we hope that van der Stel's dreams will merge into reality.

Within a short distance of Vergelegen is the beautiful house of Morgenster. Here the gables are unusually good, whether on house, wine-cellar, stables, or slave-quarters. The gable over the front door, with its shell apex and graceful scrollwork, belongs to the type of which Mr. Herbert Baker writes, in his introduction to Mrs. Trotter's book, *Old Colonial Houses of the Cape of Good Hope* :

'It is undoubtedly an original form—nothing exactly like it is to be seen in Holland or Belgium. In the old Weigh House at Amsterdam there is a book called *Alle de Huizen en Gebouwen van Amsterdam*, in which drawings are given of all houses in the Heerengracht and the principal streets of Amsterdam as they appeared a few centuries ago. The majority of the gables of these houses were variations of the type just described [i. e. the Schoongezicht type], but a few more were like the type we are now considering . . . Although, according to the book quoted, this form was rare, and though none exist at Amsterdam at this day, it is possible that from it the Cape gable may have been developed. There it has, however, been very much simplified and improved from its rococo original.'

One of the Morgenster buildings has a crow-step gable—a form rare at the Cape, though very common in Holland.

Morgenster has the large, cool rooms of all the old Cape homesteads. The fine sash windows are unspoiled, though the louvred shutters may be an addition of later years, the old teak shutters being usually solid, sometimes pierced with a hole. There is something to be said in favour of the louvred type, though it does not lend itself so well to the fine ironwork decoration and hinges which we find on the earlier shutters.

The Cape housewife, in common with all dwellers in warm countries (unless her lot is cast in a cool district) closes both shutters and windows after the house has had its early-morning airing, and her rooms are of a pleasant temperature on the warmest day.

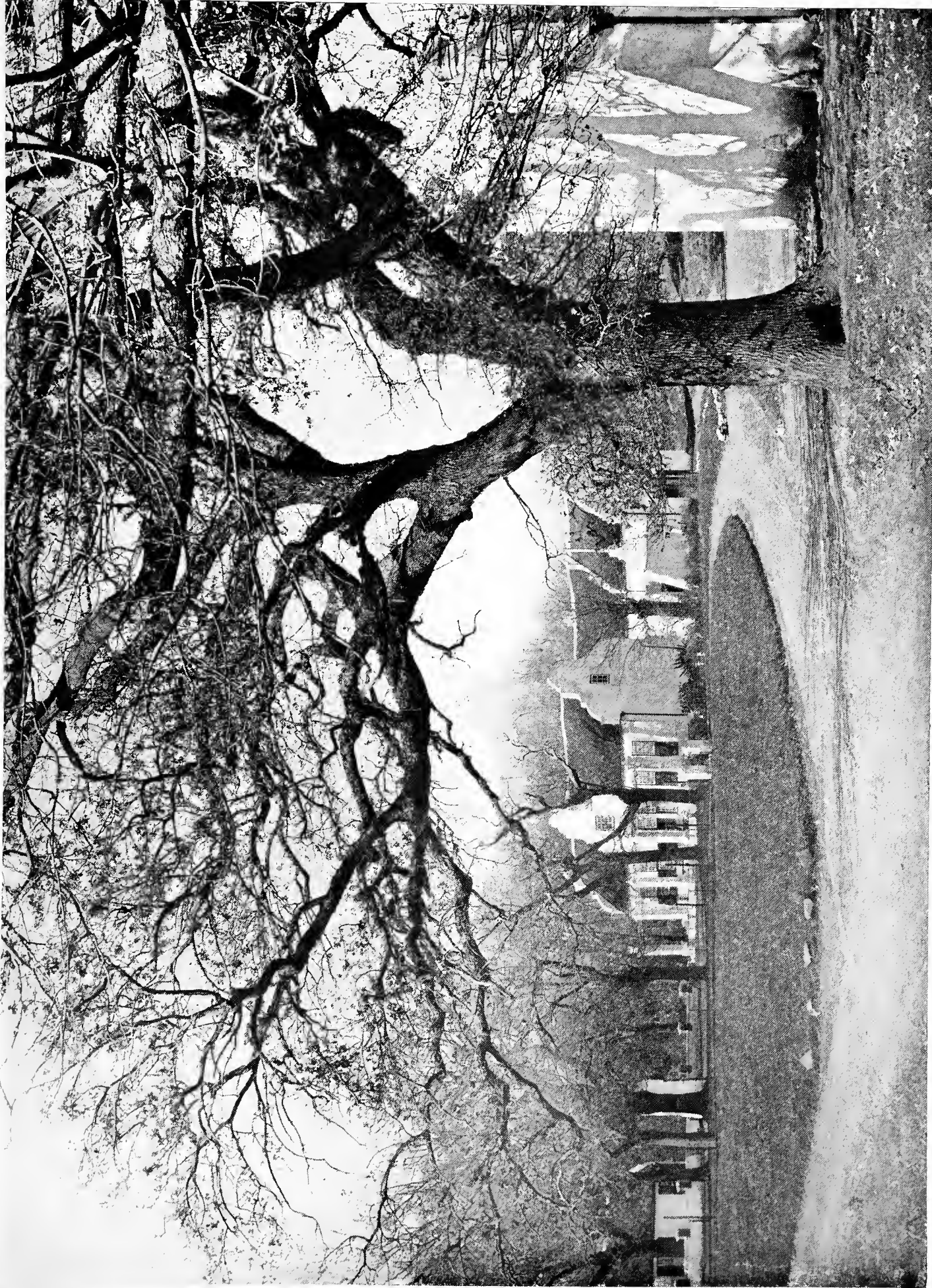
The present owner of Morgenster was born a Morkel, the old family estate coming into her possession a few years ago. Rome, a homestead of simpler design near by, belongs to the same family. The Morkels have been landowners in this district for over two hundred years, and though the present Morgenster only dates from 1786 there was an earlier house near by, now used as an outhouse.

The Morkels seem to have kept clear of the disputes which tore the Cape asunder two centuries ago. Perhaps they were wise in their generation, for it must have been infinitely pleasanter to till the rich soil and watch vineyard and orchard break into leaf and fruit than to be embroiled in strife. But Philip Morkel, who came to the Cape in 1691, married Marie Bibon, widow of the Huguenot Hercule Verdeau, who was a supporter of van der Stel, and perhaps he shared his predecessor's views. It is difficult to keep the name of van der Stel out of these records of the old houses, for the Governor's brother Frans owned the neighbouring homestead of Parel Vallei, now the property of a branch of the Myburgh family.

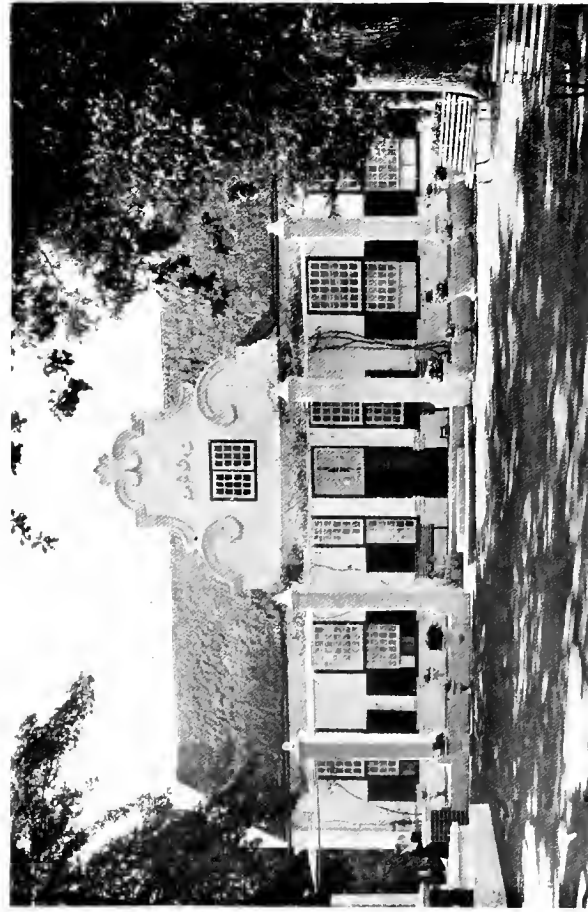
Parel Vallei is pleasantly situated, facing the sea and open to the sand dunes and the cool, salt breezes which blow across from False Bay. Here Frans van der Stel lived with his wife, a daughter of the Burgher Johannes Wessels, and here his descendants might have lived to this day but for the ill-will of the Huysing faction that extended to every one bearing the name of van der Stel, and led to his banishment 'beyond the limits of the Company's districts and boundaries'.

How many of the travellers who to-day pass by train through this fair country, on their way to the hot baths of Caledon, give a thought to the fierce passions which swept over it two centuries ago? On the one side envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness; on the other ruin, dismay, and bitter grief. For no appeal from the sentence of banishment touched the Seventeen at Amsterdam. The Governor's petition to be allowed to retire to Vergelegen with his family, 'to live there as a forgotten burgher,' was icily dismissed, and to Frans van der Stel's 'respectful request' to be informed 'how far the orders of banishment extended, and in what direction'—I own that this sounds very like clutching at a straw in the hope of rescue or reprieve—the curt reply was made that it appeared 'very frivolous,' and that he was to 'leave the Cape, and, as soon as possible, proceed beyond the Company's limits'. Can you not read between the dust-laden lines? On the one hand human despair: curt officialdom on the other. How many times has the tragic drama been played out since?

Small wonder that the hearts of the condemned men yearned over the country they had learned to love. They had reclaimed it from the wilds, had cleared away the heath for their corn and the rhinoster-bush for their vineyards. At Paarde Vallei, nearer the shore, the vlei was owned by Frans van der Stel, and there is reason to suppose that he cleaned it out, deepened the water, and experimented in fish-



MORGENSTER



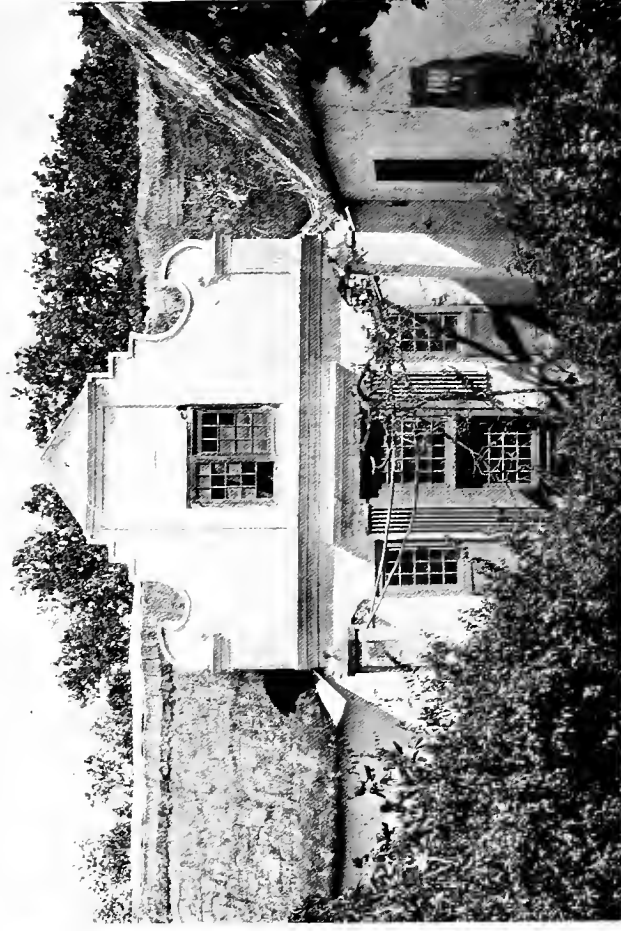
MORGENSTER



BELL-TOWER, MORGENSTER



BACK GABLE, MORGENSTER



PAREL VALLEY

breeding. The house of Parel Vallei was enlarged and altered about a hundred years ago, by an ancestor of the present owner.

Not far off is Onverwacht, which for many generations has belonged to the Morkel family ; the Morkels were prosperous burghers from 1691 onwards, and Onverwacht was granted to the first member who settled at the Cape. It was, in all probability, a beautiful house, but the present homestead is a modern building. A picturesque pigeon-house is all that remains of the earlier Onverwacht—now called The Bush.

There are other interesting homesteads in this district, though many houses that were once picturesque have been hopelessly modernized. On the homesteads that remain still lingers the fragrant spirit of romance. I sat on an acorn sack the other evening, as the setting sun dyed the mountains behind Vergelegen wine-colour. Above me stretched a mighty camphor tree of van der Stel's planting ; before me lay the land he had loved and the house in which he had prayed to be allowed to end his days. It all happened more than two centuries ago. Historians have wrangled over the rights and wrongs of the story, and the name of van der Stel is but a shadow in the land. But for me, as I sat and dreamed under the green of his trees, it might have happened yesterday. And the shadow seemed greater in substance than much which we call reality to-day.

XI

A WIDE AND SUNLIT LAND

EARLY summer, and a golden haze over the country—the fine gold of sunshine falling on the rich fields of ripened oats and filtering through the dust of the roads.

They were reaping the harvest on either side of the railway line between Eerste River and Stellenbosch, leaving a little red-brown plant which grew close to the ground and gave it a russet tint in lieu of the shorn and unlovely appearance usually presented by stubble. Sleepy clouds still clung to the blue hills, waiting for the day to be more advanced before they roused themselves. A little cool wind blew in at the carriage windows, tempering the warmth of the golden sunshine. Much of the country was sadly blotted out by Australian wattles, but in the intervals between them and the vineyards and corn lands were breadths of purple scabious, tufts of scarlet heath, and white cats' tails and clumps of yellow lapageria.

And at last we came to Stellenbosch, and from the station jogged in a white-hooded Cape cart down the golden dust of a pine-bordered road, until we came to Vredenburg, where Philip Gerrit van der Byl built his homestead in 1692, and which is one of the Rhodes Fruit Farms to-day. It was too late to save the original house when Cecil Rhodes bought the farm, as he saved others, for it had been destroyed by fire some forty years earlier and rebuilt after the uninteresting manner of the day, on the foundations of what must have been a fine homestead.

The old stoep remains, paved with red tiles and rounded at the corners, with rounded steps at the back and front. Careful inspection of the modern house reveals the fact that the old yellow-wood ceilings and floors of several rooms remain, as do the old doors of teak, under a heavy coating of paint. In the kitchen, where the original open hearth remains, the door possesses a graceful crutch-handle—the solitary remnant of what was probably the beautiful brass work of van der Byl's Vredenburg. It must have been a very fine homestead, judging from the ground-plan and the farm buildings.

There are some buildings behind the house which have graceful gables. The wine cellars may be of a later date, and the gables are

less fine in their curves. The bell tower still stands, as it stood in the old burgher's day, and there are the remains of a sundial. A tangle of roses fell over the low wall of the *werf*, tall clumps of feathery bamboos waved at the river's edge, and at one end of the gabled, white-walled wine cellar scarlet pomegranate blossoms flamed in the sunshine of the golden morning.

Near by lies Klein Vredenburg, a small farm which was granted in 1691 to Hendrick Elbertz, Heemraad of Stellenbosch. Apparently he thrived, as all the farmers did during the van der Stel days, for thirteen years later he owned the fine farm of Aan den Weg, in Stellenbosch Kloof.

His sons, Johannes and Nicolaas, were among the nine mutineers against the Government in 1706 who refused to appear at the Castle to answer the charge—as recorded in the Archives—of 'Writing, drafting, and signing of libels and defamatory letters, full of treason and insult, falsely forged against the authorities here'.

Chief amongst these letters was the charge against the Governor, Secunde and Minister, drawn up by Adam Tas at the instigation of Huysing and others. It is interesting, though not perhaps surprising, to find how near to each other all the opponents of van der Stel lived, for Libertas, the homestead of Adam Tas, is another neighbour of Vredenburg. Before crossing the river to look at it a word must be given to the columbarium of Klein Vredenburg; there are many farms upon which you find these graceful dovecots.

The first grant of Libertas was made in 1692 to Hans Jurgen Grimp, whose widow, Elisabeth van Brakel, Adam Tas married. It was a very fine farm, though, as we gather from Tas's diary, its cultivation was left to his slaves and hired Hottentots. The present homestead was built or altered in 1771, but further alterations have shorn it of much of its beauty. Within are some interesting mural paintings, said to be the work of a German artist who visited the Cape while the homestead was in course of construction or alteration. It also possesses a fireplace with teak doors, similar to the one at Meerlust, and there still remains an old slave bell, inscribed 'Me fecit Amstello-dami, anno 1732'. It is difficult to say how far the present Libertas is the original homestead of Tas. Tradition ascribes that distinction to the smaller house at the side—now modernized beyond recognition—but I incline to the belief that he lived in the larger house. It is, at least, improbable that a well-to-do landowner would have been satisfied with an inferior house to the dwellings of Huysing or van der Byl.

If we may judge him from his own diary, Adam Tas was lazy

and a wine-bibber, credulous, agile with his pen, and easily swayed by the more clever men who poured into his receptive mind the charges against the Governor which have come down to us in his writings.

Out of his own mouth, as shown in his subsequent recantation of the charges made against van der Stel, he stands convicted of untruth, and any chance reference to his diary will show you the man himself.

' July 6, 1705. To Stellenbosch this morning, and paid Mr. Mahieu 2½ rix-dollars for three books bought by me . . . thereafter to Mr. Bek's, where sundry pipes of tobacco and a glass or two of sack between whiles. Then comfortably, with Messrs. van der Bijl and van der Heijden, to my house, where we eat dinner, and after dinner fell to playing cards, and between times a round of the glass, and in the evening eat and drink again together, and after supper our acquaintance parted.

' 7th. Took horse this morning and rid with Mr. van der Heijden to his place, where we mighty brisk discoursing and drinking and smoking, not forgetting the eating neither ! And so at night to rest and sleep.

' 8th. Delicate fine morning. Did find my head on rising pain me a great deal . . .

' 9th. Fine morning. Our people busy again pruning and delving.

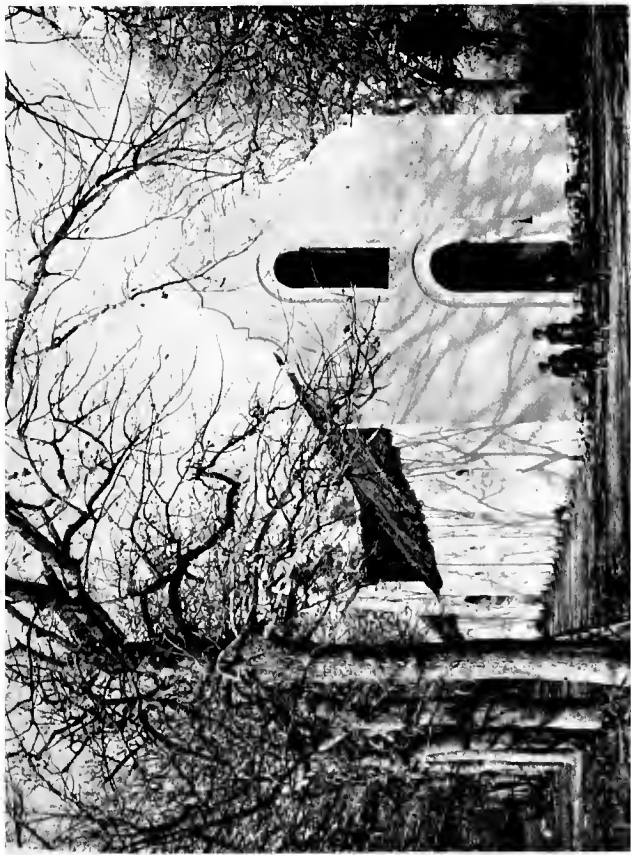
' 11th. Dull morning. Two of our slaves been pruning again.'

And so on throughout the diary—days spent in eating, drinking, and gossiping with van der Byl and van der Heyden while the slaves delved and pruned the good land of Libertas. Small wonder that, in thinking of such men, van der Stel was moved to write sorrowfully to the Seventeen at Amsterdam :

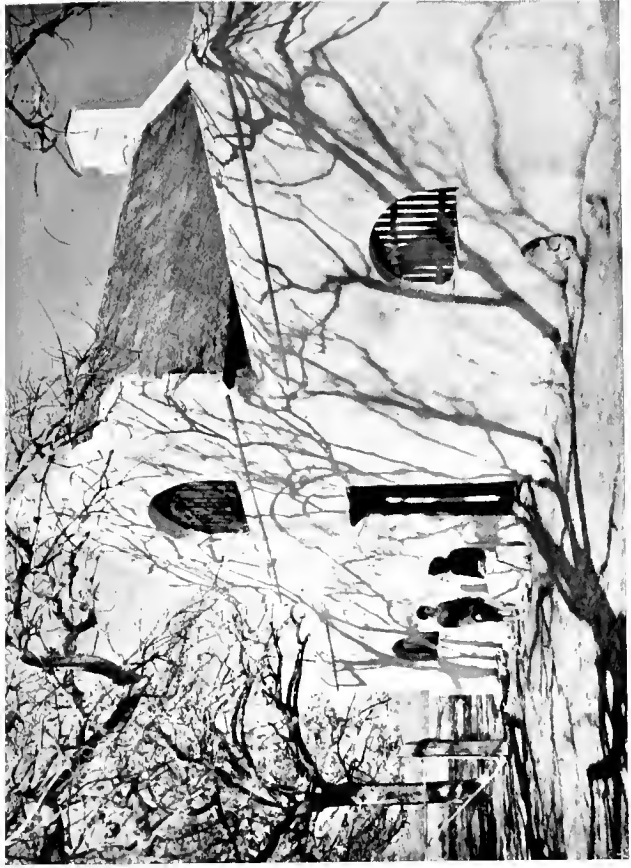
' It is clear as the sun that our striving must be that corn, meat, and wine should be obtainable here in abundance and cheaply, that the Company's ships may obtain enough supplies. This, however, is once and for all against the interest of the farmers, who will not see it with satisfaction. They prefer a lazy and jolly life, and to make much out of small wares, rather than cherish the interests of the Company . . . They desire a free importation of wine from the country, to do with it as they like. Consequently, smuggling has assumed such dimensions that undoubtedly it will cause the profits of the Company to suffer severely. Should, however, the Governor prevent it, the hatred towards him will become more bitter. We therefore request that you may be pleased to make such regulations as will meet the case.

' But, in order to give you further proof of the lazy and thriftless life which the farmers lead among themselves, and how little they improve their lands or work, we send you a portion of the journal kept by Adam Tas, the secretary of this wicked crew, and found among the papers seized with his desk.'¹

¹ Dispatch of the Council of Policy to the Seventeen, March 31, 1706.



WINE-CELLAR, VREDENBURG



PIGEON-HOUSE, KLEIN VREDENBURG



WINE-CELLAR, RUST EN VREDE



WINE-CELLAR, KLEIN VREDENBURG



ONE OF THE MURAL PAINTINGS AT LIBERTAS

Adam Tas and his diary have perhaps occupied an undue amount of space, but it should be read by all students of South African history, not only to enable one to understand the man himself, the pettiness of his mind, his credulous acceptance of every statement made by 'Uncle Huysing', but also because of the interesting sidelights it casts on life at the Cape two hundred years ago.

An earlier owner of Libertas was Hans Jurgen Grimp, whose widow Tas married. Kolbe writes of him as 'a wealthy and public-spirited gentleman, who had a fine estate near the bridge over the Eerste River. He observed that it was narrow and dangerous, and he therefore erected a large and stately bridge at his own expense, his neighbours not being inclined to pay their share'.

Near Libertas is Doornbosch, granted to a burgher named Brouwer in 1692. It still retains a charming gable, and we were shown a magnificent armoire with silver fittings which had come from Libertas.

And in the afternoon we came unto a land of rich farms and bad roads. Everywhere the golden harvest was being reaped or strawberries gathered, and we passed innumerable trays of ripe fruit carried on crisp black heads.

Towards Helderberg we drove in the drowsy warmth, through Nietgegend and Rustenburg vineyards, until we came to the deeply-furrowed precipice which is the road to Rust en Vrede. This was originally part of the neighbouring estate of Bonte Rivier, which was divided between the two sons of the original owner, Laurens Lieben-trau, who built both homesteads about 1776, though a beam dated 1720 in one of the outbuildings of Bonte Rivier suggests that there may have been an earlier house on the site. The most charming feature of Rust en Vrede is the cellar, with its festooned gable and fan-light windows set in small Batavian bricks—the light filtered in through the broken windows in their graceful setting as into a church, and shed gleams of gold on the onions heaped on the floor, transmuting them to opals and pearls.

The view from the homestead was glorious, for the old Huguenots and Dutchmen had a keen sense of beauty. Down a broad oak avenue and a somewhat less precipitous road we drove to Mr. J. Krige's neighbouring farm of Bonte Rivier, which has a pleasant and prosperous homestead and a very beautiful wine cellar. Both are similar to those at Rust en Vrede—the **H** in each homestead being deficient in one arm—but the cellar gable at Bonte Rivier is decorated with a flagon and glass in plaster instead of with the more romantic festoon.

Bonte Rivier belonged to the parents of Jan Hofmeyr, and part of his boyhood was spent there.

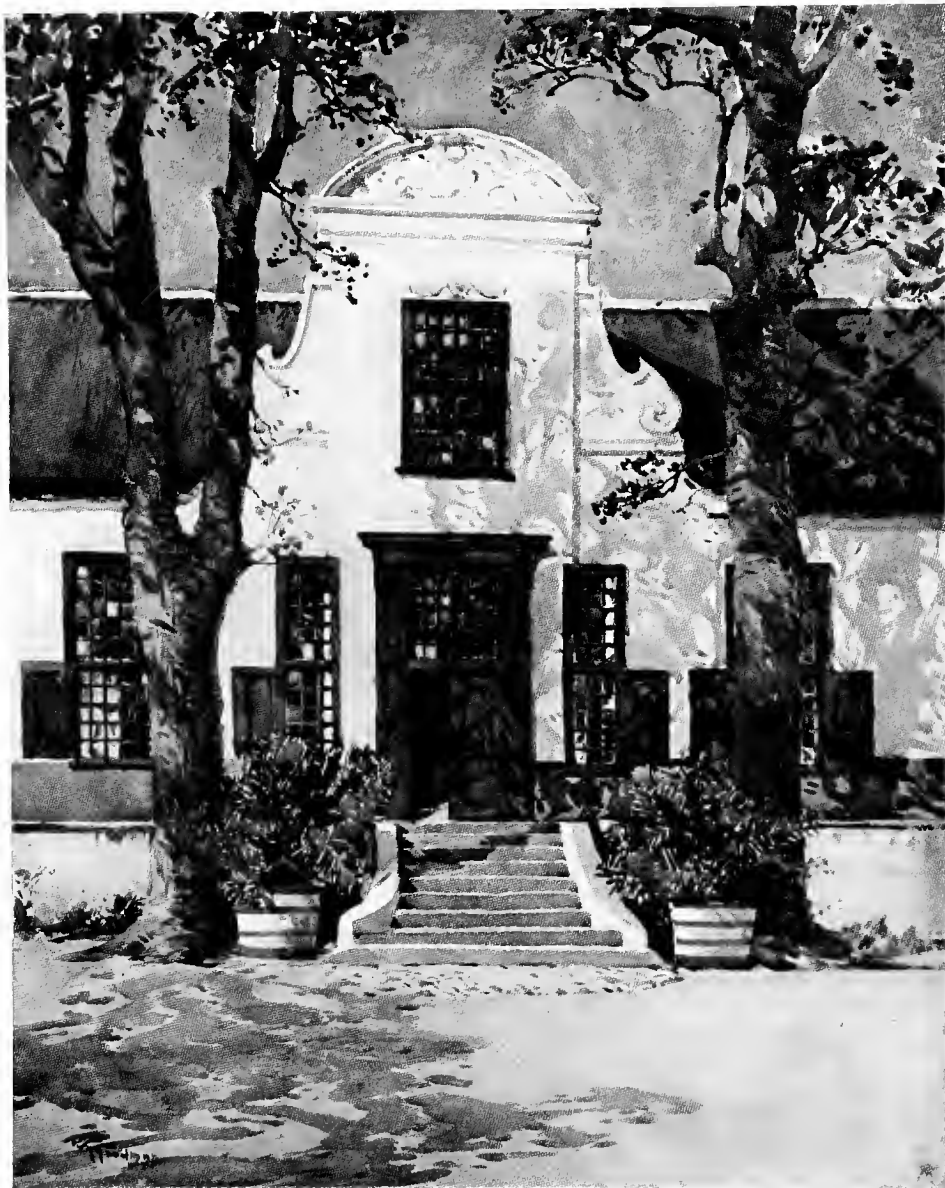
We had meant to continue our drive to Annandale, once van Brakel's Dal, the farm of Johannes van Brakel, whose sister married Adam Tas. Time failed us, however, so we turned back towards Stellenbosch, driving through a thriving orange grove and up a steep road to the top of a hill. Here again the land was yellow with grain around us and in the far distance. Dark green stone-pines stood out sharply in the landscape against the opal blue of the neighbouring hills, and on the far horizon Table Mountain and its attendant crags were purple on a field of gold.

In the valley from which we had climbed, the white gables of Groen Vallei gleamed among their sheltering oaks. Not far off was Groen Rivier—on the land granted to Abraham Bastiaans in 1693, and in the distance lay the homestead of Frederik Botha, Zand Berg, now the property of Mr. Scholtz. A fair land this; it is difficult to imagine anything more lovely than this corner of Helderberg.

We passed near Groote Zalzee, the property granted to Nicolaas Cleef in 1693, and turned off the road at Mr. de Waal's homestead of Blaauw Klip, on the land granted to Gerrit Visser in 1690.

The setting sun was reflected on the iridescent panes of the fine windows in their teak mouldings, and there was an air of dignity over the house. The roof, lamentable to relate, was marred before it came into Mr. de Waal's possession, but perhaps some day may see the shorn gables restored to their former beauty. Judging from the plaster-work which has escaped destruction, they must have been very good. Blaauw Klip must have been one of the most stately houses in the district, and was built in 1789; an earlier dwelling-house, built in 1780, being now used as a school-house. There was a still earlier house, of which only a few bricks remain, buried in an orchard. The homestead has a very fine dining-room, with charming old carved wall-cupboards. The back of the house is almost as picturesque as the front, with casements in the place of sash-windows, and if the gables could be restored in their former grace—but not in the manner of some modern builders—there would be few Cape houses to compare with it.

The neighbouring farm of Fleur Baai was given to Pierre le Febre in 1696, and across the railway-line is Dwars in den Weg, a grant of 1697 to Jan de Wilde.



STELLENBURG

From the oil-painting by R. Gwelo Goodman

XII

STELLENBOSCH

IT is two hundred and forty years since Simon van der Stel rode into the smiling valley which is girt about with mountains and watered by the Eerste River on its way to the sea from the slopes above Jan de Jonker's Hoek. The land must have been as white with ornithogalum and as pink with heath and monsonias on that spring morning as when I saw it last week. The river must have cluttered as joyously over the round stones and tussocks of reed as it does to-day. But there were no white houses, no great oaks, no vineyards, no flush of peach blossom—and no Theological Seminary. It was a wild land upon which he looked when, filled with love for the country and desire for its expansion—a desire not shared by the Company—he founded the town of Stellenbosch and called it by his own name, in his first year of office, 1679.

Six months later found nine families settled in the valley, farming the land and authorized to grow anything that would grow on it—save tobacco, as that would have interfered with other interests of the Company. By August 1682 more families had arrived and they were all so much at home in their new surroundings that it was soon found necessary to establish a Court of Heemraad to settle disputes between neighbours.

The names of the first Heemraden are familiar to us, owing to the part they played in the story of the Cape. They were Pieter Gerrit van der Byl of Vredenburg, Henning Huysing of Meerlust, Hendrik Elbertz of Vlotenburg, and Hans Jurgen Grimp of Libertas, whose widow subsequently married Adam Tas. Three years later the first Landdrost, Johannes Mulder, was appointed by the Lord of Mydrecht. The original Drostdy stood on the site of the present Theological Seminary ; it was built in 1686, burned down in 1710, and rebuilt, again burned down and rebuilt in 1762, only to be pulled down a century later.

Stellenbosch had suffered heavily in the great fire of 1710, caused by the heedlessness of a slave who was carrying a light for the Landdrost's pipe, when many of the burghers' houses and the avenues of oaks perished. Fifty fine houses were built immediately

afterwards, the records tell us, and it is probable that amongst them were the flat-roofed buildings of Georgian type of which several examples still remain.

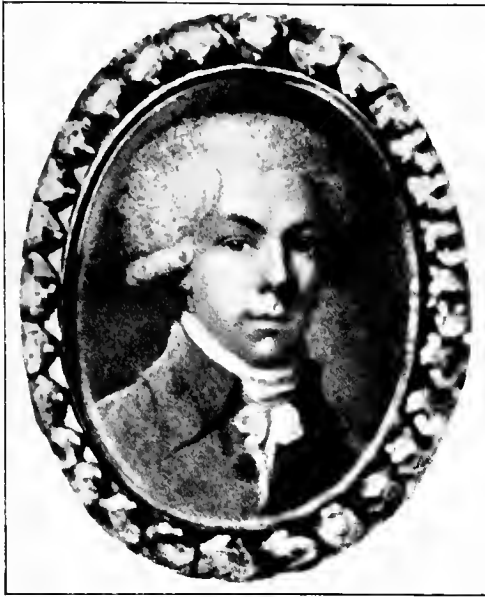
Mr. Barrow—afterwards Sir John Barrow—who accompanied Lord Macartney to the Cape as private secretary in 1797, speaks of the Drostdy as ‘an excellent house’, and even Lady Anne Barnard, who shows surprisingly little appreciation of the beauty of the old Cape homesteads, describes it as ‘airy and spacious’. Both writers are enthusiastic in their description of the two great oaks which stood before it, each measuring eighteen feet round. Lady Anne, in her charming letters to Lord Melville, writes thus of Stellenbosch in 1797 : |

‘The perfection of this place consists in its extreme coolness in the midst of the most sultry weather. It is built in long streets, perfectly regular, each street having on each side a row of large oaks which shadow the tops of the houses, keeping them cool and forming a shady avenue between, through which the sun cannot pierce.’

Modern Stellenbosch, under the rule of the Dutch Reformed Church of to-day, must rub its eyes when it reads in the same letter of the ball given at the Drostdy by Landdrost van der Riet on a Sunday evening a hundred and twenty years ago. It was the custom at that time to assemble on Sundays at the great homestead of the neighbourhood and dance in the great hall formed by the unlatching of the screen which threw voorhuis and dining room into one apartment. An old inhabitant of the Paarl has told me that the custom lasted up to his boyhood, church having been scrupulously attended in the morning. I wonder whether old Stellenbosch was any the worse for its Sabbatical minuets and gavottes, and whether they were a more doubtful influence than sundry political meetings, held in later days after Nachتماال, were likely to prove.

The Oude Molen—the burghers’ corn mill—was erected in 1686, and readers of Adam Tas’s diary will remember how often his strolls with van der Byl took the two gossips for rest and refreshment to the mill-house. The first church built in Stellenbosch in 1687 was only forty feet long by twenty-two feet wide, but the growing population of the little town soon overflowed this limited space. The building was enlarged and made into the form of a cross in 1699, and was probably very comely and not unlike the graceful church which the Paarl has been wise enough to leave unspoiled. The second church of Stellenbosch has, however, been altered into a larger but less interesting building.

The first deacon was Dirk Coetsee of Coetsenberg, and the original



JACOBUS JOHANNES
LE SUEUR
Landdrost of Stellenbosch 1763-1769



ARMS OF THE
LE SUEUR FAMILY



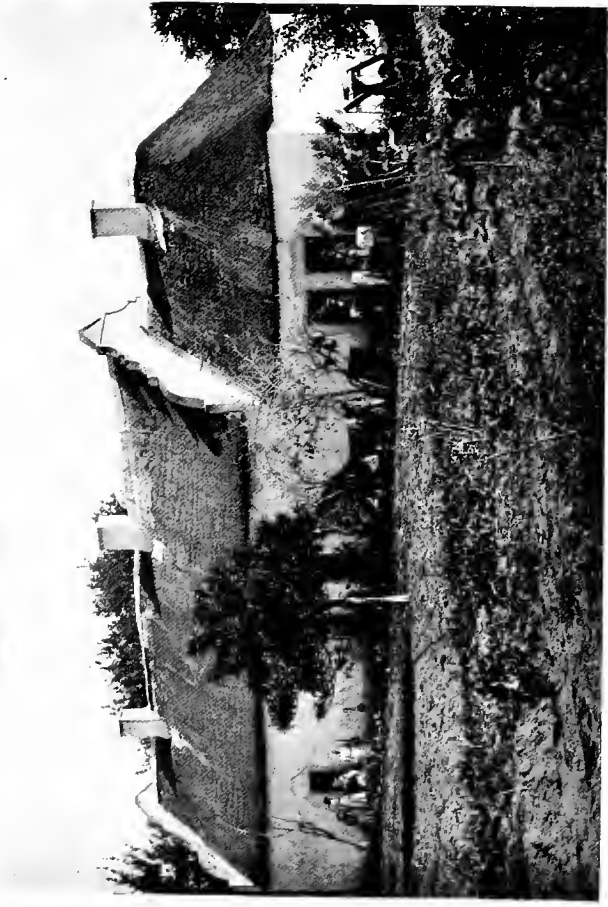
LA GRATITUDE



MUNICIPAL OFFICE, STELLENBOSCH



KROMME RIVIER



OLD COTTAGES AT STELLENBOSCH



OLD HOUSE ON DE BRAAK

church was opened for service on the occasion of one of Simon van der Stel's annual visits, when he celebrated his birthday and the kermis or fair of 1687. During the time of these fairs all Stellenbosch was given over to merry-making. Men, women, and children climbed or rode up the hill, which is still known as Papagaaisberg, and shot on a painted wooden parrot, or *papagaai*, on a pole. It was a time of general recreation and holiday, which probably no one enjoyed more than the kindly little Commander himself.

Glancing at Stellenbosch to-day from the train, the first impression is one of rich vineyards and plantations, fine oaks and dark green stone pines, among which are set the houses. If Simon van der Stel could stand on Papagaaisberg and look down on his town he would be able to trace the outlines of the old streets and the winding of the river, for the older part of Stellenbosch still occupies the plan laid down by him.

Some fine houses are to be seen, and of these Kromme Rivier, Mr. du Toit's homestead, lies nearest to the old railway station. The original house, now almost a ruin, dates from about 1680. In 1771 another homestead, now used as a wine cellar, was built, while the present dwelling dates from early in the last century.

From Kromme Rivier the way to the town of Stellenbosch is up a long street which takes its name from Colonel Christopher Bird, Colonial Secretary in the time of Lord Charles Somerset. At the end of the street is a wide, open space known as De Braak, where on the hottest day the sweet babble of water is to be heard from the little canals which lend such charm to Stellenbosch. Great oaks are here too and line many of the streets—some of them the trees which in their infancy were the nurselings of the van der Stels. In the Archives there is a letter, dated 1699, authorizing the Landdrost Michiel Ditmars to order the freemen of Stellenbosch each to send a wagon to the plantations of Rustenburg at Rondebosch and to take thence twenty thousand young oaks—twelve thousand for Stellenbosch and eight thousand for Drakenstein. It will be remembered that the subsequent neglect of many of these young trees was one of the sources of trouble between the farmers and the van der Stels. To-day they are stately oaks and shade the streets and squares of Stellenbosch.

The old Arsenal of the Company stands on De Braak. It bears the monogram O.C.V. and the date 1777. In the Municipal Office close by—an old house with a charming fanlight under its verandah—are kept the little old cannon which, report says, were taken by General Janssens to Hottentots' Holland, as a last resource against

the English army. In a corner of De Braak is a beautiful little old house. It has a tin roof and was somewhat out of repair when I saw it—but the graceful gables were intact. It is not always a misfortune for the old houses when the owners have no money to spend on them. Money too often brings striped iron verandahs and other atrocities in its train. It provides plate-glass windows in deal frames and front-doors grained to look like maple. But, on the other hand, it enables those who realize the value of their lovely houses to preserve them in their original beauty. Other buildings on De Braak are the old church of the Rhenish Mission (with its gable an example of everything that a gable ought not to be), built in better, kindlier days than those through which we have passed, and the Girls' School founded by the same Mission many years ago. The front of the school house has been rebuilt, but in the rear is a charming old garden with myrtle hedges, mulberry trees, and a tall palm. In this garden, rumour says, a slave was murdered by her master, and once a year, when the moon gleams on the white, waxen flowers of the myrtle, she wanders beneath the vine-covered pergola. A slave-ghost seems oddly incongruous with the healthy, busy life with which the school vibrates—from the classrooms with impossible-looking problems chalked up on the black-boards to the large airy cooking-school where the girls are trained to be good housewives.

In Herte Street are a few quaint old houses with small gables. It leads into Dorp Street, where the most interesting house remaining is La Gratitude, built as a Pastorie by the Reverend Meent Borchers in 1798. In the memoirs of his son, Petrus Borchardus Borchers, we read that he 'placed in the portico the emblem of the All-seeing Eye, which in this the country of his sojourn had watched over him'. The older Pastorie, built for Minister Bek in 1704, was about seven houses lower down the street.

At the top of Dorp Street is Drostdy Street, and at the corner stands the modern Theological Seminary, on the site of the old Drostdy. Turn down the street and look at the fine old classical house, once the Brand family house and now belonging to Mrs. Collins. It is a dignified building, and has a particularly graceful fanlight over the screen and a good door. The plaster tree over the door is a very usual device on Stellenbosch houses—Kromme Rivier has it—but I can find no explanation of it. In Italy one would say: 'Of course—a della Rovere Pope'; but this is obviously inapplicable to Stellenbosch.

On the outskirts of the town lies Coetsenberg, granted to Dirk Coetsee in 1692. Nothing of the old homestead remains; there is



HOUSE IN DROSTDY STREET



THE COMPANY'S ARSENAL, STELLENBOSCH



GABLE ON A STELLENBOSCH HOUSE



OLD VAULT, STELLENBOSCH



GABLE AT STELLENBOSCH



RHENISH SCHOOL

a large modern house on the site, but fortunately the magnificent trees survive. One oak measures seventeen feet in girth four feet from the ground, and under its shade a charming little stream croons its way past what was once the stoep of the old burgher's homestead. Most of the houses in this neighbourhood are new, though on old sites, but one beautiful little homestead remains and is now the Wesleyan Parsonage.

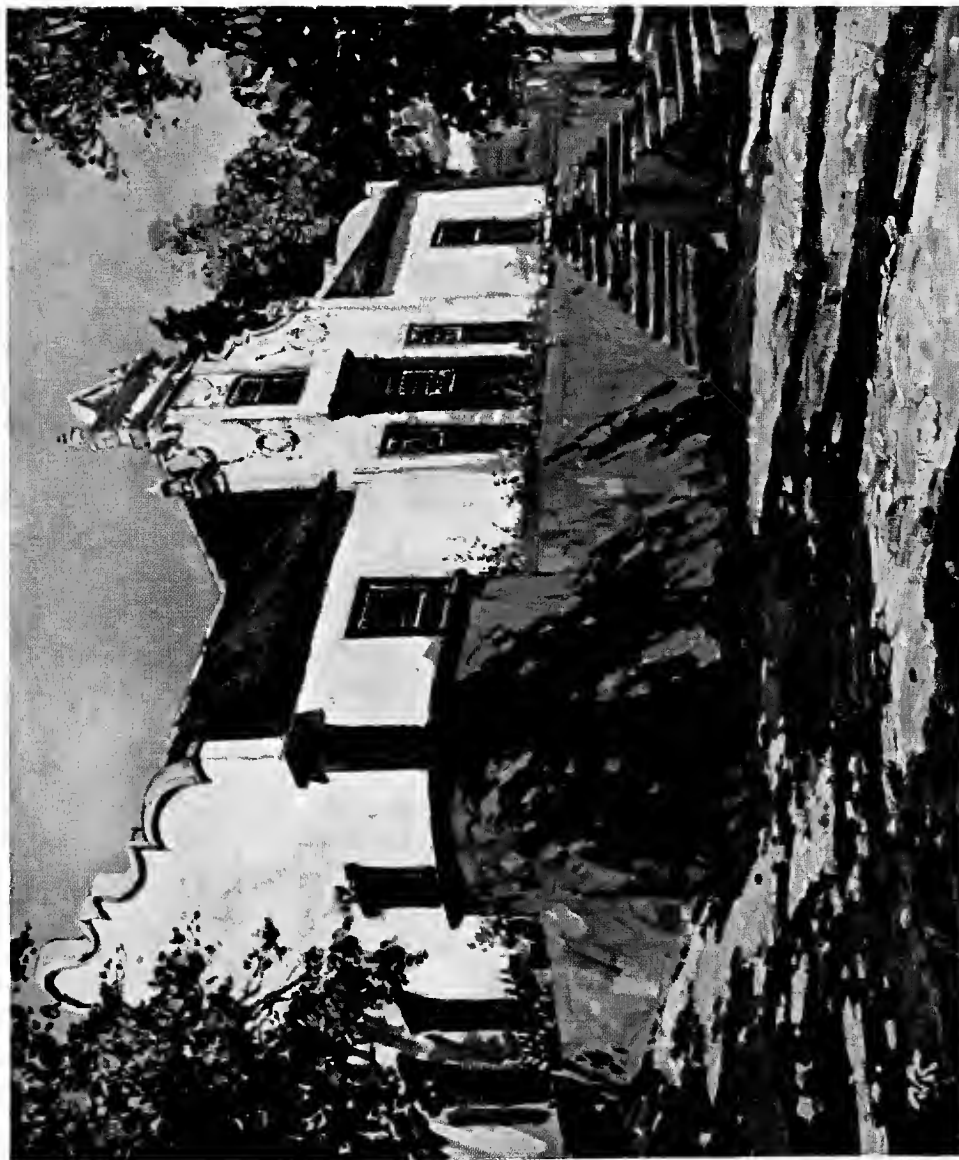
From the modern villas in their gay little gardens I looked to the eternal hills which fold Stellenbosch in their arms. Around her, inviolate and unchanged, rest the grey and purple mountains which sheltered the fair valley into which Simon van der Stel rode in 1679, and to which he left his name. It is a goodly heritage still—the town which he gave in trust to those who should come after him.

In the memoirs of Petrus Borchers, who was born at La Gratitude in 1786, we have many pleasant glimpses of life in Stellenbosch a century or so ago. Here, for instance, is a picture of Dominie George Knoop at the close of the eighteenth century, as he walked to the Parsonage on Fridays with 'a grave and stately face' to receive the minister's directions regarding the service for the next Sunday—the Psalms, marriages, christenings, &c., marriages always being celebrated after the Sunday service. He wore a black coat cut in the clerical style, knee breeches, and silver knee and shoe buckles. He also wore a wig with two rows of curls and a small three-cornered cocked hat, and carried under his arm a fine rattan, silver-mounted walking-stick.

The kermis was kept annually at Stellenbosch until 1796. The Governor and Landdrost sat, Mr. Borchers tells us, in an alcove of old oaks near the mill, while the Burgher Corps filed by. The dress of an officer was a fine blue coat, the flaps turned up, the breast decorated with silver embroidery, an orange sash, white waistcoat and breeches, high boots covering the knee, silver spurs, a cocked hat with 'panage' coloured according to the standard of the company, and a sword. He was well mounted and seated in a high saddle, the latter sometimes lined with red cloth embroidered with silver, as were the holsters and saddle-cloth. On one occasion Stellenbosch was visited by a Burgher Corps from Swellendam, wearing broad-brimmed hats with the red, white, and blue cockade, then the emblem of the revolutionary party in Holland; South Africa had her internal troubles in the Company's days as well as under the Union Jack, and Swellendam was then in the throes of a mimic rebellion, which died down as other rebellions have died down before and since.

From Stellenbosch a pleasant road leads out to Jonker's Hoek

among the mountains, where—on the land granted to Jan de Jonker by Simon van der Stel—are the Trout Hatcheries, where the trout, which are now found in many South African rivers, were first hatched out from ova brought from England. On the way you pass several interesting old houses. One of these bears the favourite name of Schoongezicht, and a little farther up the valley is the picturesque homestead of Nectar.

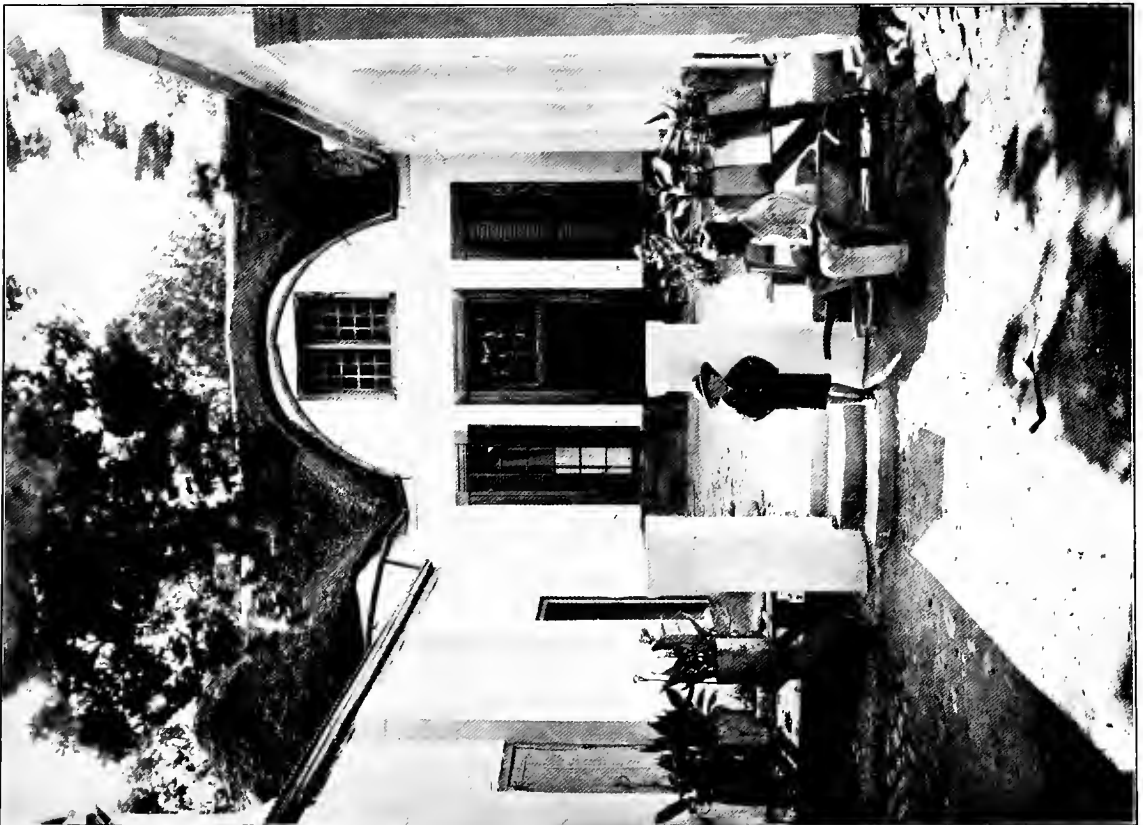


NECTAR

From the oil-painting by R. Gwelo Goodman



NECTAR



BACK OF LA GRATITUDE



OUT-BUILDINGS, SPEIR



BACK OF SPEIR



BELL-TOWER, SPEIR

XIII

SPEIR AND STELLENBOSCH KLOOF

GREY mountains—powder-grey, melting into smoke-colour in the fissures ; rose-tinted mountains, which had been grey an hour earlier ; purple mountains—wine-coloured in the shadows and pale-violet where the sun lingered.

Thus the Hottentots' Holland changed from moment to moment and from morning to noon and evening as we passed swiftly over the land which lies between the Cape Peninsula and the Moddergat, turning aside here and there to one white homestead or another. The motor chirruped pleasantly, like an unusually large and joyful cicada trilling its appreciation of the still heat. With a chirrup that was almost a fanfare we turned off the sun-baked road and swept between two white pillars and up to the stoep of Speir, near the little railway station of Lyndoch.

For a moment the green of its sheltering trees dazzled eyes that were tuned to the soft grey of the rhinoster-clad plain over which we had come. Here were veteran giants of oaks, the acorns falling noisily on the earth beneath. A weeping-willow—a very Niobe among trees—drooped over the little stream that tinkled past the homestead, which lay deep hid in shade as profound as that of Vallombrosa.

Giants among oaks indeed. There are some behind the house of enormous girth, as old as the buildings themselves or older. And Speir is no mushroom farm, but one of Simon van der Stel's own grants, made to Arnout Janssens in 1692. He was apparently one of the earliest settlers in the district and seems to have held the land on loan from 1683—the later grant bears the picture of a house which was already in existence, but it is difficult to say whether this is the present homestead or one of the charming gabled outhouses.

From Janssens, Speir passed into the possession of a burgher who rejoiced in the alliterative appellation of Hans Hendrik Hattingh—let us hope that South Africa took the aspirate seriously two centuries ago. He seems to have lived a peaceful and uneventful life at beautiful Speir, emerging from its pleasant obscurity once as one of those who signed the petition in favour of the younger van der Stel. In 1698 he married Marie de Lanoy,¹ a daughter of the old Huguenot exile who

¹ Probably the widow of Ary Lekkerwyn.

owned Boschendal in Groot Drakenstein, and his second wife was Susanna Visser. After passing through various hands Speir was bought in 1781 by Andries Christoffel van der Byl, who added to the original grant part of the neighbouring farm of Vlotenberg, and a large tract of land on the Eerste River. To the van der Byls it belonged from that date until the present year. Speir probably owes its name to Hattingh, who is described as 'van Speyer' or Spires, in Rhenish Bavaria. In all new countries there are names which betray the yearning of exiles for the homeland. Australia has its Perth and York. Canada has Argenteuil, Gloucester, Dumbarton, and a score besides. South Africa has Middelburg and Salisbury, besides all the French names to which the Huguenots clung so passionately. They were not allowed to give them to the towns, but their farms bear to this day such musical names as Rhone, Burgundy, Orleans, Versailles, Lormarins, and so forth.

The interior of the homestead of Speir is larger than the outside would lead one to expect. There is a small *voorhuis*, with a dining-hall beyond of fine dimension and floored with wide planks of polished fir—not deal, but a heavily knotted wood producing almost the effect of walnut. Some good old furniture still remained here when I saw the house—a tall Dutch clock, a solid press with silver fittings, a sofa with carved gadroon edges and cockle-shell ornamentation.

But pleasant as are the shaded rooms of the homestead, the outside is even more attractive. For, besides the house, there are the old out-buildings—the wine cellars, the slave quarters, and the stables—each with a different form of gable. There are at least six varieties to be seen, and they differ greatly in merit. One, dated 1778, may have been built at that time by the then owner, Albertus Myburgh, or it may only have been repaired by him and the date added. It has fine, simple curves, and the plaster ornamentation shows a definite purpose, unlike the meaningless twirls and twiddles of much modern decoration. The other gables are, for the most part, more florid in outline and less graceful, but all are interesting and show that the architect was not content to work on stereotyped lines.

It is a pity that the old deeds and transfers do not go beyond *morgen* and *roods* and tell us something of the old houses themselves, and of the manufacture of the fine solid furniture that passed from generation to generation. It is true that we are told that when Albertus Myburgh bought Speir in 1765 he took over five slaves, nine wine-vats, one teak rice-barrel, two wooden vats, and one grape case, but there is nothing particularly inspiring in the information. It would be more interesting to know who made the fine old presses



GABLE AT SPEIR



A FARM-BUILDING



NEETHLING'S HOF



BONFOI



BIJ DEN WEG



OUTHOUSE AT BONFOI

with their silver handles and the great brass-bound chests which are fast passing from their old homes to the dealer or collector.

Speir owes much of its extraordinary charm to the blessed water that runs in and out and round about. The Eerste River lies within a few hundred feet of the homestead, below steep banks which are spanned by a bridge, and fine trout are caught in it. Tall clumps of giant bamboo grow near by, and figs, apricot, mulberries, and roses flourish in a small garden. In the centre of this garden hangs the old slave-bell, the belfry grown round with clematis and surmounted by two white plaster vases and a lion. The slave-bell rang out as we sat dreaming, though there are no slaves to-day to summon from pruning vines or digging sweet-potatoes. To judge from the out-buildings Speir must have owned a goodly number in the old days, and it may be doubted whether their lot was not as happy a one as that of their descendants, free to come when they like and go when they like and get drunk when they like. I hold no brief for slavery, but no one can contend that wisdom was exercised in the manner in which the boon of freedom was conferred upon a people who were half children, and wholly incapable, either through tradition or training, of resisting the world, the flesh, and the devil when brought into sudden and unrestrained association with them.

Below the stoep ran a streamlet fringed by a broad band of hydrangeas that had once been blue but were now dying in every gradation of chrysoprase and chalcedony, jade and dull turquoise. Overhead an eagle swept lazily across the unspecked blue of the sky, from the mountain peaks in the near distance to the far-off dynamite factory and the sea. As far remote as East from West does modern man with his machinery seem to be from this old homestead, hidden away from the world under its oaks and its willows of Babylon. It is difficult to feel that anything really matters very much here except that the grapes should ripen in due season and the roses grow in unpruned luxuriance.

A few miles to the northward of Speir lies Stellenbosch Kloof, known to the Huguenots as Bonfoi, and here are several interesting homesteads. At the head of the valley is Uiterwyk—the 'Outer Ward'—granted to Dirk Cauchet, Coetsee, Coetse, Kotzee, Coetchee, or Koetchee, for he appears under each variation in the records, by Willem Adriaan van der Stel in 1699, though he had held it on loan from 1682. He also owned Coetsenberg on the outskirts of Stellenbosch, where a modern villa now stands on the site of his homestead. His wife was Sara van der Schulp, and they reared one of those fine large families for which the Cape has always been famous, though the ten fledglings seem to have taken wing early.

In 1721 we find him petitioning the Council of Policy to permit him to leave the country and live in Cape Town. He had served the church as deacon and elder, he says ; been heemraad often and captain of the Stellenbosch infantry ; now he lives with his invalid wife, without any children in the house, and the difficulties of a country life are beginning to tell on him. Two years later, however, we find him complaining of his son Cornelis, and begging the Council to send him to India in the service of the Company. We might be moved to pity for his loneliness but for this evidence of his inability to keep his house in order.

The Landdrost Starrenburgh mentions him amongst those who came to his assistance in the Stellenbosch riots against the Government in 1706, and he signed the petition in the Governor's favour.

Uiterwyk must originally have been a very fine house. The gables, including those over the wine-cellar and stables, are unusually interesting and show the elaborate character of the original building. Unfortunately, the four end-gables—it is one of the **H**-houses—have been shaved off to make way for the iron roof. The gable over the front door is very heavily moulded, and though the actual plaster-work is fine the design is rococo and less beautiful than the simple and less ambitious gables to be seen on the neighbouring homestead of Aan den Weg, formerly called Bonfoi.

This house stands on ground which, with the neighbouring farm of Bij den Weg, was granted to Hendrik Elbertz by the younger van der Stel in 1704, and is now the homestead of Mr. Gideon Joubert and his brother, descendants in the eighth generation of the Huguenot Pierre Joubert who came to the Cape with his wife Isabeau Richard and one child in 1688, amongst other French *émigrés*. From the exile who left home and kindred for his faith are sprung the innumerable Jouberts who are spread over South Africa, including the old Boer Commandant upon whose death Rudyard Kipling wrote the fine verses beginning :

‘ With those that bred, with those that loosed the strife,
He had no part, whose hands were clear of gain.
But subtle, strong, and stubborn, gave his life
To a lost cause and knew the gift was vain.’

The homestead and the wine-cellar of Bonfoi, to give it its old name, are two precisely similar buildings—**T**-shaped, with gables showing combined curves and crow-steps, and roofs of smooth brown thatch. The unusualness of the plan was explained by Mr. Joubert. His great-grandfather, Willem Adolf Joubert of Bij den Weg, divided the property between his two sons. On this portion he built the

stable and wine-cellar, leaving between them a level expanse of sward on which the homestead was to stand, but before it could be begun he died. He was much to be regretted, for the man who built such graceful outbuildings would assuredly have left a very fine homestead behind him. One of these buildings became the present dwelling-house—a pleasant little place, under the shade of its giant oaks and unspoiled by modern alterations.

Not far off is the older Joubert homestead, Bij den Weg, a larger house with very charming end-gables. The front and the interior have been modernized, but the back of the house still retains its casement windows and heavy teak shutters and is very picturesque. Over the front door the gable is of an interesting type, decorated with a plaster eye and a sundial. Beneath are the initials D. J. and L. J. K. They stand for Daniel Joubert, born 1759, one of sixteen brothers and sisters, who married Louisa Johanna Krige and contributed twelve more members to the growing tribe of Joubert.

A still earlier house lay behind the present homestead.

Not far off is Neethling's Hof, once known as Wolvendans, the Dance of the Wolves, which were probably jackals. This land was granted in 1699 to Barend Lubbe, who does not appear to have been noted for anything in particular. His two daughters married two of Dirk Coetzee's sons, Jacobus and the recalcitrant Cornelis, who apparently did not go to India but settled down to blameless domesticity.

The way to Neethling's Hof is up a prodigiously long avenue of stone-pines, which melt into oaks as they near the homestead. The house has the great merit of being unspoiled, and the gable over the front door has, in common with many other gables, a decoration of plaster stars. Whether this was designed originally as a compliment to the van der Stels, I do not know, but it may have been so. The high sash windows are set in a frame with a curved top, and a similar window is set in the gable itself. The terminal gables of the **H** rest on pilasters; this feature is found in several of the homesteads, and has a good effect.

Mr. Louw, the owner of Neethling's Hof, has a large extent of land under tobacco, besides thriving vineyards. Tobacco is grown at Bonfoi, too, while Bij den Weg looks out on hills which were green with young wheat. Here oranges hung in golden masses on the laden trees and the air was sweet with the perfume of the flowers. There was a pleasant scent from the newly-turned chocolate-coloured earth too, and from clumps of cabbage roses in the old-world garden, while busy hordes of red-beaked rooibekies swept twittering through the orchard as the hum of our motor roused them from their mid-day siesta.

XIV

AT THE FOOT OF SIMONSBERG

ON a cool September morning—the spring-time of the Cape—we drove out through the pine plantations of the Forestry Department and the less praiseworthy masses of Australian wattle on the Flats. Wattle is a beautiful thing for three weeks in the year—for the rest it is dull and scraggy and has the supreme demerit of ousting and destroying the far more lovely native flora. It is, however, being planted in great quantities, in order to prepare the ground for crops of tomatoes and other useful things, but to those to whom heath and ixias are more than tomatoes it is anathema.

At last we passed from the wattles to the open veld and its flowers. They are true children of the Sun God, and under the pearly sky of this spring morning the glorious gazanias and mesembryanthemia had refused to open, and the rose-pink stars of the monsonias were half-furled. But there were clumps of white arums, wide masses of creamy sparaxis, coral-coloured watsonias, orange satyria, and brilliant blue babianas. Sometimes we passed a patch of young corn, emerald-green, with the yellow flowers of the tulip hovering above it on almost invisible stems and looking like yellow butterflies. Then the wild veld would take us to its heart again, as we sped through sweeps of pink heath and rich brown grasses. Here and there stalked a solitary secretary-bird. Out of the bushes flew black and gold finches as we passed, and hawks circled overhead. Far away the Drakenstein mountains were white with snow against the sky. White, too, were the homesteads which nestled in their folds, shaded by oaks now clad in the virginal green of spring. Umbrella pines, dark against the grey of the hill-sides, gave an Italian note to a landscape that was otherwise very like the pikes and fells of Westmorland on this cool September morning. And at last we came to Stellenbosch and passed through it to Ida's Vallei on the Kromme River, at the foot of Simon van der Stel's six-peaked mountain.

The original grant of ' Groot and Klein Ida's Vallei and Nazareth ' was made to the Huguenot exile, François Villon of Clermont, on another September day in 1692. His wife was Cornelia Campenaar, and their son Henning married Marguerite de Savoie after the death

of her first husband, Christoffel Snijman. She was the daughter of Jacques de Savoie, a sturdy and truculent old Huguenot who with his wife, Marie Madeleine le Clerc, had come to the Cape with special introductions from the Company. In them he is described as 'one who has been under the cross of persecution at Ghent for many years'. Whether there is any truth in the tradition which assigns him kinship with the royal house of Savoy it is difficult to say. There are many strange stories associated with the old refugees, stories such as that of the du Plessis who came to the Cape at the end of the seventeenth century. He was of the house of Richelieu, and his descendant was the actual head of the family. But, for the most part, the stories are vague, and I have only mentioned the Savoy tradition because there is over the door of Ida's Vallei a device in plaster which may or may not be a crown, and a plaster bird which may or may not be an eagle. If it were the white cross of Savoy it would carry more conviction. At present the namesakes of François Villon bury their name in its Dutch form of Viljoen, while that of de Savoie has died out of the country.

An early house evidently stood near the present homestead, which belongs to Mr. Malleson and is set in a thriving fruit farm. Some ruined walls and the remains of an Italian garden have been found. If the dates on the old door-plates are to be taken as indicating the age of the present building the portion which is now the back of Ida's Vallei was built in 1787 and the present front in 1789. That the back was once the front is easily to be believed, for it has an equally beautiful gable, with heavily moulded scrollwork in plaster, and the eagle in plaster is over the graceful fanlight above the doorway. The windows which look out on what is now the front have been modernized, but this was before the present ownership, and those windows which look on what is now the back still retain their charming small panes, iridescent with age and weather, and their heavy teak shutters.

Yet another story lingers round Ida's Vallei, though there is no record of it in official documents. It is said that Simon van der Stel, whose wife remained in Holland, loved a lady called Ida van der Merwe and gave her a portion of the land on which Ida's Vallei now stands. The story is very vague and any one may read what he pleases into it—for my part I think it is to the credit of Governor Simon and the lady that Ida's Vallei was as far from Constantia as it was possible for any place to be in those days.

Farther up the valley lies Rustenburg, now the homestead of Lord de Villiers and originally granted to Pieter Robbertz¹ in 1699.

¹ The letter z at the end of a name stands for *zoon* = son

We come across him several times in the diary of Adam Tas—at first as a friendly neighbour, then as ‘ the old Norse berserk of a landdrost Robertz ’, and finally, as the plot against van der Stel develops, as being ‘ mighty honourably commended of the Governor upon laying down of his office as landdrost ’, and ‘ a pestilent rogue with some information to discover ’. From which we may conclude that the old Norseman did not share the views of Adam Tas—indeed, we find his name, with those of many other prominent burghers, attached to the petition in van der Stel’s favour.

Rustenburg is unlike many of the old houses in the extreme and austere simplicity of its gables, those over the front and back doors being severe in the purity of their outline while the ends of the **H** are hipped. The effect is very pleasant, especially as a contrast to the beautiful but more elaborate gables of its neighbours. Another unusual feature is the magnificent central hall, which extends from the front to the back of the house, without any dividing screen or voorhuis ; it is wide and high in proportion, and the effect of all this simplicity is great dignity and spaciousness.

The woodwork throughout the house is fine. It has polished yellow-wood floors and rafters, and heavy doors on which the original brasswork has fortunately been preserved.

From the stoep of Rustenburg we looked across a lovely valley. To our left lay Stellenbosch and the open veld, where a flock of black-faced Persian sheep grazed contentedly. Beyond were the foam-crested waves of False Bay, hemmed in by the mountains. Before us lay acres of fruit orchards, bare still, save for an enterprising pear or plum tree and the pink quince-blossoms in the hedges. And—blending with Rustenburg—the wide fruit-lands of Schoongezicht, the rich rose-coloured earth showing through the bare branches of the peach trees, the oaks round the homesteads clothed with a delicate veil of green. A mighty oak hangs above the stoep of Rustenburg, and beneath it a semi-circular flight of steps leads up to the front door. Beneath the stoep, at one side, an opening in the wall showed a dark cellar, traditionally called the Slaves’ Hole, though one hesitates to believe that it was ever used as a prison for disobedient slaves.

From Rustenburg it is only a walk of a few minutes to Mr. John X. Merriman’s homestead of Schoongezicht.

This is a wine-farm as well as a fruit-farm, and the vines had apparently more confidence in the weather than had the peaches, for the early varieties were in leaf and covered with minute bunches. The later grapes were only showing grey-green sprouts.



OUTHOUSE, RUSTENBURG



RUSTENBURG, BACK OF HOUSE



RUSTENBURG



IDA'S VALLEI, BACK OF HOUSE



SCHOONGEZICHT

‘ And the leaf-buds on the vine are woolly,
 I noticed that to-day.
 One day more bursts them fully,
 —You know the red turns grey.’

Schoongezicht was originally part of Rustenburg, but was cut off in 1810 and sold by Jacob Eksteen—then owner of the latter farm—to his son-in-law Arend Brink. Arend was the youngest of thirteen brothers and sisters and his elder brother Cornelis was the proud father of eighteen sons and daughters. It is difficult to understand how any house of moderate dimensions accommodated these fine large Cape families.

The date of a grant does not necessarily coincide with the building of the homestead, many lands having been held for a long time on loan or possibly, in this instance, on hire. There is a beautiful little building at the side of the main house, now used as a wine cellar but perhaps the original homestead. The back of the present dwelling was built in the same year and the front in 1813, a year after it passed into the possession of Hendrik Cloete.

Like most old houses in the country Schoongezicht is H-shaped and has very fine gables. Those over the front and back are of the type frequently seen on the eighteenth-century houses of Holland, while the four end-gables are of the graceful form most commonly found at the Cape. Within is a good louvred teak screen, cutting off the voorhuis from the dining-room beyond, and the doors, floors, and ceilings are all of fine yellow-wood. Schoongezicht has a very high stoep, once surrounded by an iron railing on which hung a speaking-trumpet, through which Hendrik Cloete was wont to shout his orders to the slaves working in the wide vineyards below, while he sat on the stoep and drank coffee. To-day Mr. Merriman grows magnificent peaches and plums in the orchards, and at the side of the house, below a grape-vine pergola, lies a charming garden where flowers come to rare perfection. At the entrance to the garden is a large pomegranate tree, and the blossoms are dazzling scarlet against the blue sky.

XV

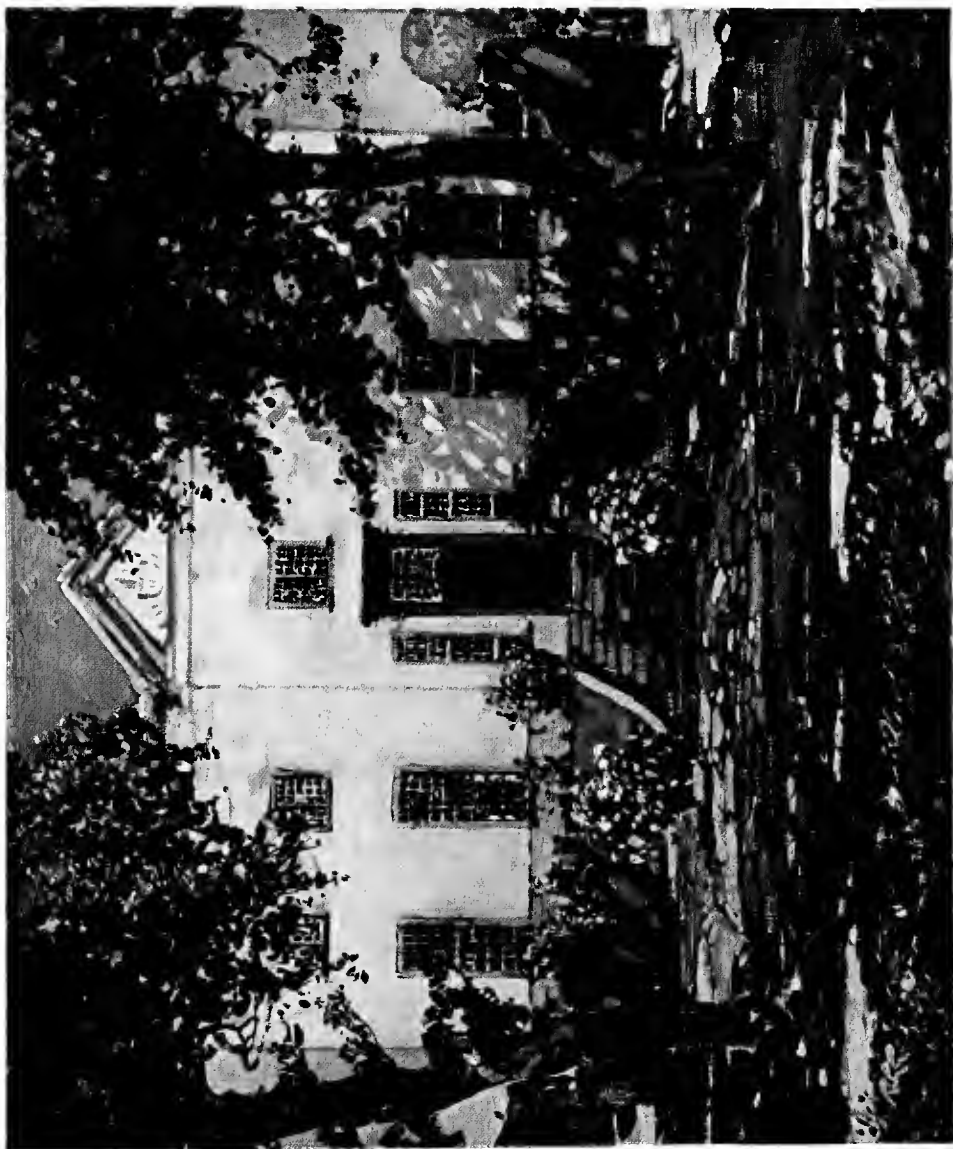
NEAR MULDER'S VLEI

IF you take the Bottelary Road from Stellenbosch to Cape Town it leads you past two early grants—Koelenhof, given to Simon de Groot in 1694 and the house of Nooitgedacht, on the land granted to Mattheys Greeff in 1692. It was one of the farms bought by Cecil Rhodes and is one of the finest of the homesteads which he saved from alteration or destruction—it is now the property of Mr. Lange. As you leave Stellenbosch behind you it is pleasant to see the curved gables and brown roof of Nooitgedacht among the green of its sheltering oaks, and the emerald sweep of the great vineyard which slopes upward from the homestead. The long wine cellar near the house, with its lines of mighty vats, is commensurate with the size of the vineyard.

For several generations Nooitgedacht belonged to the Cloete family¹ and it is thought that the present house may have been built during this time. In 1771 the entrance hall was decorated with mural paintings, probably by the artist who decorated the walls of Libertas. The great dining hall has two graceful cupboards with curved fronts set in the wall, and in them are treasures of old cut glass and silver—too rarely found to-day in the houses in which they were once matter-of-fact articles of daily use.

The road curves round the hill and leads past the railway station of Mulder's Vlei, in whose neighbourhood are several homesteads of historic interest. The ground upon which the station lies was granted in 1714 to Johannes Mulder, who had been appointed first landdrost of Stellenbosch in 1685, and it was originally called Hopenburgh—the families of Hop and Mulder being connected—but the farm to-day is known as Mulder's Vlei. There are few traces of the old homestead left in the present house. Johannes Mulder was one of the witnesses who testified to the younger van der Stel's innocence of the accusation that he had profited by cattle barter with the Hottentots and had moreover employed force to extort the cattle from them. It will be remembered by students of Cape history that both the van der Stels were opposed to free barter between the natives and the colonists, realizing that it was unwise to place this

¹ This family gave its name to the granted to Guillaume du Toit in 1692 neighbouring homestead of Cloetesdal, under the name of Aan het pad.



UITKYYK

From the oil-painting by R. Gwelo Goodman

power in the hands of men who were not all too scrupulous in their methods of dealing with the Hottentots, and that it was permitted by the Company against their advice. Many abuses followed, though Johannes Mulder, in exonerating the Governor from any part or lot in the matter, declared that he himself had always conducted his barter with the natives with 'good fellow- and friendship'. That this was not always the case many subsequent tragedies proved, and it was a refinement of ingenuity which moved Adam Tas and his friends to charge van der Stel with profiting by an arrangement which had been made in defiance of his advice.

The van der Stel association deepens when you cross the railway line and drive up an avenue to Elsenburg, the fine house which has recently been partly destroyed by fire but has been rebuilt on the old lines, the gables having escaped destruction. It is now the Government Agricultural College, but was formerly the homestead of the Melck family, having been built by Martin Melck on the site of a still older homestead—also destroyed by fire—which was built in 1698 by the *Sieur Elsevier*, the *Secunde* or second official in the Council of Policy. It was as lovely a spot as a hard-worked man could desire, wherein to rest at intervals, far from councils and officialdom. Doubtless Elsevier often looked out across his wide vineyards to the distant outline of Table Mountain, grey against the green and gold of the sunset sky, and looked forward to a leisured old age spent in the shade of his oaks, with the murmur of the little canal of Elsenburg in his ears. For, little as the Governor whom he served and with whom he was ruined and exiled, did he think that 'in such a sweet and pleasant climate such heavy and dark clouds would overwhelm and sweep him away', as van der Stel wrote in his appeal to the Seventeen in Holland—a very pathetic document to those who can see beneath the stiff and elaborate phrases the soul struggling passionately for the justice which was denied it. And not denied to van der Stel only, but to the *Secunde* in whose defence he wrote fervently that the charges brought by Adam Tas 'might be safely passed by here, with the full confidence that Elsevier will thoroughly be able to clear his character from these vile imputations. But van der Stel considers it his duty not to keep back a just testimony regarding this slandered Elsevier of what is personally known to him'. Here is the charge formulated by Tas.

'We may just mention, with a few words in passing, that the *Secunde* Samuel Elsevier has likewise an excessively large piece of land at the so-called Klapmuts [a hill in the neighbourhood], where the Company has a station up to the present day. On that farm he also has built a large house and sows annually a large quantity of corn. He has also planted a large vineyard there, and is richly

provided with cattle ; but let it serve for Your Honours' information that, during the government of the ex-Governor Simon van der Stel, two burghers had each a farm in the neighbourhood, the one named Gerrit Jansz Visser and the other Barend Hendricks, who were both driven away from them by the ex-Governor because they were too near the Company's station, although the Secunde at present holds in possession that station of the Company and the surrounding land, on which many farmers could subsist.'

No one would suppose on reading this that the two burghers in question had been removed from the neighbourhood sixteen years earlier because of the 'trouble and injury' they were causing the Company's station, nor that they had been given two fine farms in the Stellenbosch district, nor that Klapmuts had been abandoned by the Company many years before Elsevier's grant was made. Down the centuries echoes the sense of injustice which wrung from van der Stel in his own ruin his chivalrous protest against the treatment meted out to 'this slandered Elsevier', whose only crime, even according to Adam Tas, was that he owned Elsenburg, 'which, in truth', wrote the Governor, 'is of much less mark and importance than many other farms possessed by the subscribers to the Accusation, especially that of Tas, composer and writer of the charges.' It seems almost incredible that the charges could have succeeded—as though sowing corn and planting a vineyard were crimes—and the result reflects very little credit on the intelligence of the Seventeen. We can well believe that the sorrow with which the Secunde looked out across his fair lands for the last time was embittered by the sense of injustice. His daughter married the Reverend Hendricus Bek, minister of Stellenbosch, and remained at the Cape when her father was exiled.

Elsevier's house, as we have seen, was destroyed by fire some years later, and in 1752 the estate passed into the capable hands of Martinus Melck¹ of Memel, the ancestor of a well-known Cape family. There were many evidences of his ownership on the house which has again suffered from fire, but it is thought that the walled-in canal below the house dates from Elsevier's occupation.

We have a picture of a thriving Cape farmer of the eighteenth century from Stavorinus, who visited Elsenburg about 1768.

'The dwelling-house is furnished in a neat and even costly style, so that it more resembles a gentleman's villa than the mansion of a farmer.' He speaks of the

'four large barns, each 150 feet long, in which Melck housed his corn and wine. Blacksmiths', carpenters', and a cartwright's workshops, with large numbers

¹ Through his marriage with Anna Margaretha Hop.



ELSENBURG BEFORE THE FIRE



UITKYK



WINE-CELLAR, UITKYK



GABLE AT HAAZENDAL



BELL-TOWER
ELSENBURG

of oriental slaves to work them were there. One slave cost Melck 1,500 rix-dollars, upwards of £300 sterling in the money of that day, and he had fully 200 slaves, all well housed and cared for. He owned seven or eight other farms. Some produced corn, some wine, some were for pasturage, under the care of stewards. He had a great love for his king [Frederick the Great] and decorated the chimney-pieces and other parts of his house with the arms of his sovereign. In one year he cleared about £9,000 sterling in the money of that day from the sale of wine and spirits.'

Stavorinus also visited Klapmuts, then the property of the Albertyn family, where moved by the hospitality and prosperity of his surroundings he exclaims 'Happy, thrice happy mortals, who, situated at the extremity of the globe, amidst the wilds of Africa, formerly so barren and desert, though now fertilized and embellished by your labour, can lead a life of content and innocence!'

Many of the farmers held additional grazing or corn land, and to Martin Melck belonged a fine farm at Berg River, which is still in the possession of his descendants. Here he built an ample homestead, with rooms of generous proportions, and he filled it with the fine furniture of the period which is there to this day. The farm lies in the heart of the flower-country, and every spring the surrounding veld gleams with sheets of orange arctotis or blue anchusa, or the rich pinks and yellows of the nemesia. A wonderfully lovely country is that in which Martin Melck's grazing ground is set, and where his descendants breed fine horses to-day.

We have wandered a long way from Elsenburg—but the men who built and lived in the old houses are sometimes as interesting as the houses themselves, and Melck and Elsevier were strongly marked personalities—the prosperous, vigorous burgher and the shadowy, sorrowful figure of the ruined Secunde.

There are other interesting houses in the neighbourhood. Klapmuts, once the Government post to which reference has been made, now belongs to a branch of the Cloete family. Close to it lies the fine square house of Uitkyk, built by Martinus Melck for one of his daughters on her marriage—Thibault being the architect—on the land which was granted to Jan Oberholster in 1712. It has spacious rooms, filled with beautiful old furniture by its present owner Mrs. Sauer, by whom too the garden has been brought to a state of beauty not always seen on a fruit farm, where spraying and pruning and packing usually absorb more attention than flowers. Fruit, too, there is in abundance, and beyond the avenue of palms and the pergola heaped high with Dorothy Perkins roses a flush of peach-blossom lies over the land in spring.

On the other side of Mulder's Vlei lies Joostenburg, granted to Matthys Michielse in 1694. In 1754 we find the Heemraad Gerrit van der Byl asking for a plot of land 'near his farm Joostenburg'.

There are many other old grants near Mulder's Vlei, such as Hercules Pilaar and Warborg, granted in 1701 and 1704 to the Reverend Hercules van Loon, the minister of Stellenbosch who preceded Bek and came to an untimely end by his own hand. His wife—as we have already noted—is known to us in the Company's records as 'the chaste Mrs. Maria Engebregt, whose virtue and godliness are irreproachable'. This tribute was evoked by the fact that Mrs. van Loon testified on oath to the libels and slanders uttered by the half-crazy minister le Boucq (successor to the kindly Peter Kalden who was recalled with van der Stel) in the presence of herself and Mrs. Huysing.

Some miles nearer Cape Town the road leads you past what was once the beautiful house of Haazendal—how beautiful only those can realize who have seen Mrs. Trotter's drawing of the old homestead before it was modernized out of all charm, a fine gable being all that survives of its former grace.

A lonely place out on the open veld, where only the song of a passing bird or the sighing of the breeze rustling over the wild flowers breaks the stillness. Its first owner, Christoffel Haazewinkel, came to the Cape in 1686, and after serving the Company as messenger of justice and beadle for eighteen years, was granted in 1714 the land to which he gave his name, on the condition that he should give a tithe of his corn to the Company and plant oaks and other trees to replace any that he might cut down. This was a very common condition of tenure under the old Dutch administration, and to it the Cape owes many of her fine avenues and shady woods. Haazewinkel farmed this land peacefully for twenty-four years, and then, suddenly, home-sickness gripped him—a yearning for the grey skies and tulip fields of Holland. So he sold Haazendal to Claas van Raap and Jacobus van Brochem and went his way.

But whether the old man found happiness in the land which he had not seen for forty-two years, who knows?

There is a certain melancholy over Haazendal. Perhaps it is the loneliness of the place, or perhaps it is the corrugated iron roof. There are, however, pleasant associations with the farm—it was at this homestead that the Swedish naturalist Sparrman received a welcome from the Hanoverian bailiff in charge of the farm, when he went 'a-herborising' on foot in 1772. His host entertained him with milk, an excellent stewed cabbage, and a detailed account of his love affairs.



THE OLD WALLED CANAL, ELSENBURG



ELSENBURG, now the Government Agricultural College



MADAME DE PATON

One of the pastel portraits attributed to
François Boucher

XVI

FRENCH HOEK AND GROOT DRAKENSTEIN

A WARM hush lay over the land. It was May Day—which in South Africa corresponds with that first of November which ushers in the fogs and chills of northern lands. But, as we sped from Stellenbosch up the mountain pass that is known as Hell's Hoogte, it might have been midsummer, save for the scarlet leaves on the pontac vines, which spoke of the falling sap. The earth was red, too, rich red against the grey of the rhenoster and the green of the broad leaves of the tobacco plantations. Down below us, in the ravines, early white arums gleamed. Here and there a tuft of pink heath or the waxen blossom of the protea broke into the monotony of the rhenoster.

Up and up, until Stellenbosch lay far below us as we looked back, and beyond Stellenbosch fold after fold of blue mountains, with the great Table Mountain behind them. To our left, Simon van der Stel's stern peak—where was once a 'salted' tin mine—rose sheer and purple against the clean blue of the sky. Then we began to descend, past the road to Zeven Rivieren and the farm of Bethliem, granted to Pierre Simond by Simon van der Stel, past Zorgvliet¹ and through the mission station of Pniel, nestling in the shade of its great oaks, past the red-roofed village at Languedoc which Cecil Rhodes built for the workers on his fruit farms in the valley below. And, as evening fell, we came to Drakenstein and the little house of Nieuwendorp, where he sometimes came for respite from the strenuous life which was his existence at Groote Schuur.

This farm was originally divided between Hans van Lier, Willem Basson, and Andries Pietersen—the dates of the grants vary from 1690 to 1692—but it is not known who built the homestead which fell into decay and was replaced by this cottage a few years ago.

The lovely valley was bathed in the carmine light that sometimes follows after sunset at the Cape as the motor stopped at the wide white-pillared verandah. From the Paarl Mountain on our left to French Hoek on our right it shone, flooding every peak of the Drakenstein with glory, irradiating far-off Dal Josaphat and touching the white homesteads with colour. Against the rose of the mountains

¹ Zorgvliet was granted to Casper Wilders in 1692.

the dark Italian pines reared their sombre green heads. Only the yellowing Lombardy poplars which marked the course of the Berg River and the falling leaves of the peach and plum orchards showed that winter ever touched the radiant valley.

Next morning a soft bloom lay over the land, the bloom of a ripe plum or a pastel drawing. The mountains were opal now, pink and grey with violet fissures, rugged and bare or soft and alluring according to the lights that changed from hour to hour.

For a while we sat on Cecil Rhodes's stoep, spellbound by their colour. It was Ascension Day, and the still air seemed to vibrate with a song of praise.

'Oh ye mountains and hills, bless ye the Lord. Praise Him and magnify Him for ever!'

No earthly sound broke the stillness, save an acorn that fell now and again on the roof. Even the birds and the cicadas shared in the warm, healing silence. In the far-off shadow of the blue mountains some one was burning the veld, and a column of grey smoke rose sheer into the air, unstirred by a breath of wind.

Early in the warm afternoon—for we had much to see—we roused ourselves, and the motor carried us silently down the road through the plum orchard that stretched before the house. Down the long valley we passed, following in the footsteps of Simon van der Stel as he rode between the hills on his journey of exploration, and of the Huguenot pioneers who broke up the veld to make a place for their vineyards two hundred and thirty years ago. It is a French district still. Dutch names of homesteads or families are the exception. Living on farms which bear such names as Dauphiné, Cabrière, La Provence, La Cotte, La Motte, and so forth, you find families with the old Huguenot names of Marais, de Villiers, Malherbe, Roux, Joubert, and many more. They have forgotten the language of their forefathers, and even the correct pronunciation of their own names in some cases, but the characteristics of race are not so easily obliterated. You see at a glance that the alert, dark-eyed men and women who welcome the stranger with kindly courtesy are distinct from the descendants of the more grave Dutch burghers who—with a considerable proportion of men of other nationalities—composed the earliest settlers.

It is a happy, smiling valley to-day, this French Hoek which was once Coin Français. But in the early days of the settlement the suppression of the French language by order of the Company, coupled with the desire of the *émigrés* to have a church of their own,

in preference to being absorbed by the Dutch Reformed Consistory at Stellenbosch, made it the theatre of much heart-burning and revolt against what was considered the tyranny of the Government.

'Send me no more cadets of noble families, but plain Zeeland farmers,' wrote Simon van der Stel at last, in despair.

The car wound its way past prosperous orchards and wide vineyards, through the village of French Hoek, over a precarious bridge, and up in the shade of great oaks and pines until we reached the mountain fastness of Boschenhout Vallei, where Jean Roux built his homestead in 1777.

It was a wild and glorious spot in which he placed his house, a little corner hemmed in between high mountains, green on their lower slopes and rose-red and blue above the line of verdure. The original house stood in a clearing, from which a fine view of the valley is seen, but nothing remains of the building to-day save a few foundation stones overgrown with wild bushes.

The present homestead may have been a contemporary out-building, perhaps the slave quarters. It has a picturesque high stoep and small windows with heavy shutters—the early settlers were wise in their precautions against wild beasts or marauding Hottentots.

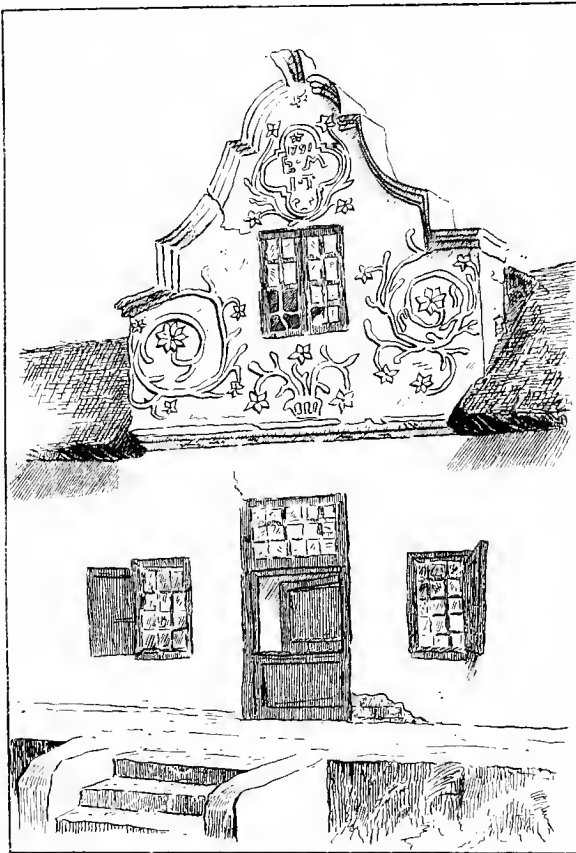
Below the kloof lie Dauphiné and the three farms which were granted to the de Villiers brothers, who came here from La Rochelle in 1689.

Some years ago, when I paid my first visit to French Hoek, I came away enchanted with the beauty of Dauphiné—the homestead on the land granted to Etienne Niel in 1710. It was a singularly perfect little house then, with gables, brown thatch, charming casement windows and a half door of teak. The stoep was flagged, and in the rear of the house a lofty shaft of cypress stood sentinel proudly. I saw it again the other day in passing, and deplored the traces of a modernizing hand. One saving grace remains, the gables are intact and in the rear the old casement windows are still to be seen, recalling what was once the charm of the front of the house, and perhaps making restoration possible. In writing of this district it is often difficult to assign an exact date to the old houses. We know when the land was granted, but it is probable that the settlers built simple houses in the first instance—the immediate necessity for a roof over their heads being more pressing than niceties of architecture, for the moment. But that the early colonists speedily became men of means is evident from the van der Stel dispatches to the Company, and from the record of passing travellers, and no doubt many of the beautiful

houses date from an earlier period than the dates on the gables would seem to indicate. As we have seen elsewhere, these dates are often only indicative of the work of later decorators. It is unlikely that well-to-do men who were familiar with Huysing's Meerlust and Simon van der Stel's Constantia would continue to be satisfied with the small, plain houses of the refugees. Quite recently I have seen

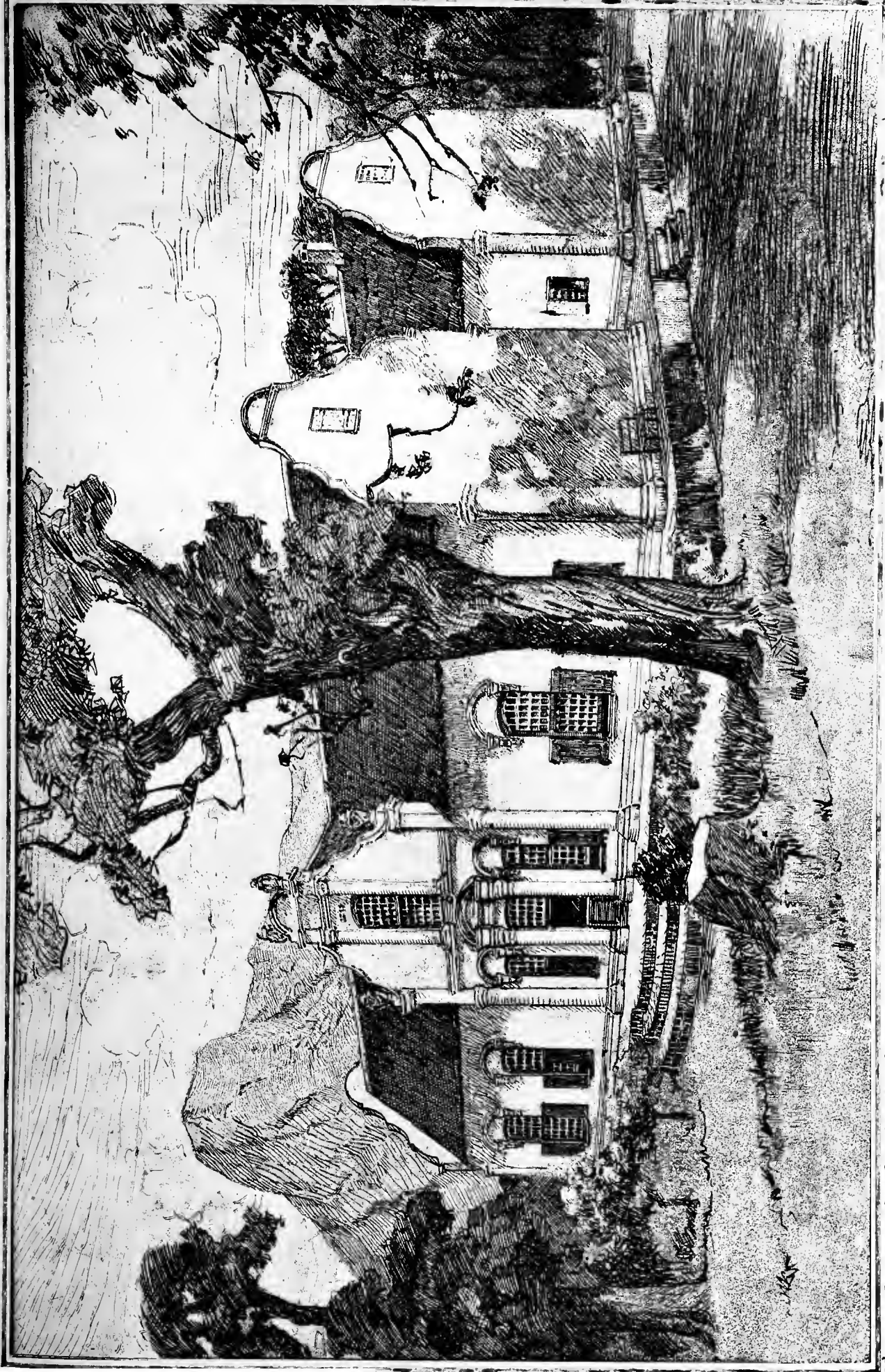
an unmistakably old gable which the builder in 'doing up' has embellished with the date of the year before last.

The three de Villiers homesteads lie near Dauphiné. Pierre de Villiers, of Bourgogne or Burgundy, the adjoining farm, married Elisabeth, daughter of Isaac Taillefer, whose farm of Picardie, at the entrance to the Paarl, was held up to the Company's admiration in the time of the van der Stels by passing travellers. From this marriage was descended Lord de Villiers, the late Chief Justice of South Africa. Of Burgundy, much of the grace has been shorn by a fire which destroyed the roof and the four end-gables of the H, but the elaborately decorated front gable is unscathed, and the windows have not been spoiled. On



BURGUNDY

the gable are the initials B. M. and I. T. and the date 1791. It is open to conjecture whether the latter initials refer to Isaac Taillefer, or whether they are contemporary with the date. Within a short walk is Jacques de Villiers's farm of La Bri, or Labori, as it is called to-day. It is now the property of Mr. Roux. The ruin of the early-house and a stump of the great tree that shaded it are in the vineyard near by. Labori too is changed externally, but within—as in the other houses—the fine rooms and floors and ceilings remain intact. Its chief glory to-day lies in the magnificent oaks that surround the house.



From a drawing by G. S. Smitard

BOSCHENDAL

Beyond Labori is Champagne, granted to Abraham de Villiers in 1711. His wife was Susanne Gardiol, sister to Jacques de Villiers's wife, Marguerite, daughters of Jean Gardiol, to whom the neighbouring farm of La Cotte was granted in 1694.

Monsieur Haussman, Consul for France at the Cape about sixty years ago, mentions the de Villiers family in his reminiscences. He says that the three brothers only left La Rochelle at the earnest entreaty of their aged parents and that the fourth brother, Paul, could not reconcile himself to this lasting farewell and returned to his home the day after he had left it. The three, when they began life in the new country, had only one horse between them, so they had to take it in turns to ride to church on Sundays and hear Pastor Simond preach. He adds that amongst the Huguenots some were 'à la noblesse, car alors on sacrifiait son rang, sa fortune, sa liberté, sa vie à sa foi'. The story of the du Plessis family is also recorded by Monsieur Haussman.

'It is told that the Emperor Napoleon I, having learnt that there existed in this colony a du Plessis, the descendant of an illustrious family of Calvinist refugees, proposed to restore to him the title which had formerly been borne by his ancestors, and to put him in possession of estates equal to those which had formerly belonged to his family, if he would return to France. But the honest old colonist, while showing himself grateful and touched by the proposition, said that he was too old to become *grand seigneur* in France, and that he preferred to die as he had lived, in simplicity at the Cape.'

From time to time small pastel portraits, attributed to Boucher, have been found at the Cape. Tradition says that a number of these were sent out from France by the relatives of the families which had gone into exile, and it is to be regretted that comparatively few are left; a collector having acquired the bulk of them from families in reduced circumstances, they were sent to Europe.

The most interesting link with the past which has been retained at La Cotte is the old oak grown from an acorn brought from France by Daniel Hugod, of Zion. On one of the Paris boulevards is a tree, grown in its turn from one of the La Cotte acorns, returned to the land of its fathers.

Below Champagne lies La Cabrière, half hidden amongst trees. It was the homestead of Pierre Jourdaan, granted to him in 1694.

If corrugated iron had never been invented, the Cape would have had fewer spoiled homesteads to mourn. At the same time we must enter into the feelings of the owners who say that thatch is not only dangerous in case of fire, but increasingly difficult to procure, owing to the cultivation of the veld on which it grew. Brown tiles,

as dark and smooth as the thatch itself, is the only substitute which has been suggested. The red Marseilles tiles take generations to mellow in this sun-bathed land—why not make mellow tiles from the first? And why pull down the gables in removing the thatch? It is possible to endure an iron roof with greater equanimity when the building it shelters is intact—there is always the lurking hope that some day it may be replaced by thatch or tiles. But destroyed gables are irreplaceable.

The old village of French Hoek and its neighbourhood are still worth exploring, on the chance of coming upon an unspoiled homestead. One of the most charming is La Provence, granted to Pierre Joubert in 1712, and at present quite untouched. The gable over the front door bears the date 1800—which may or may not be the year of its building. It also bears the following elaborate inscription: 'D. 3 M. D. 13 D.'

It took some time to discover that this stood for 'De derde maand en de dertiende dag'—the third month and the thirteenth day. In other words, March the thirteenth. A singularly picturesque little house is La Provence.

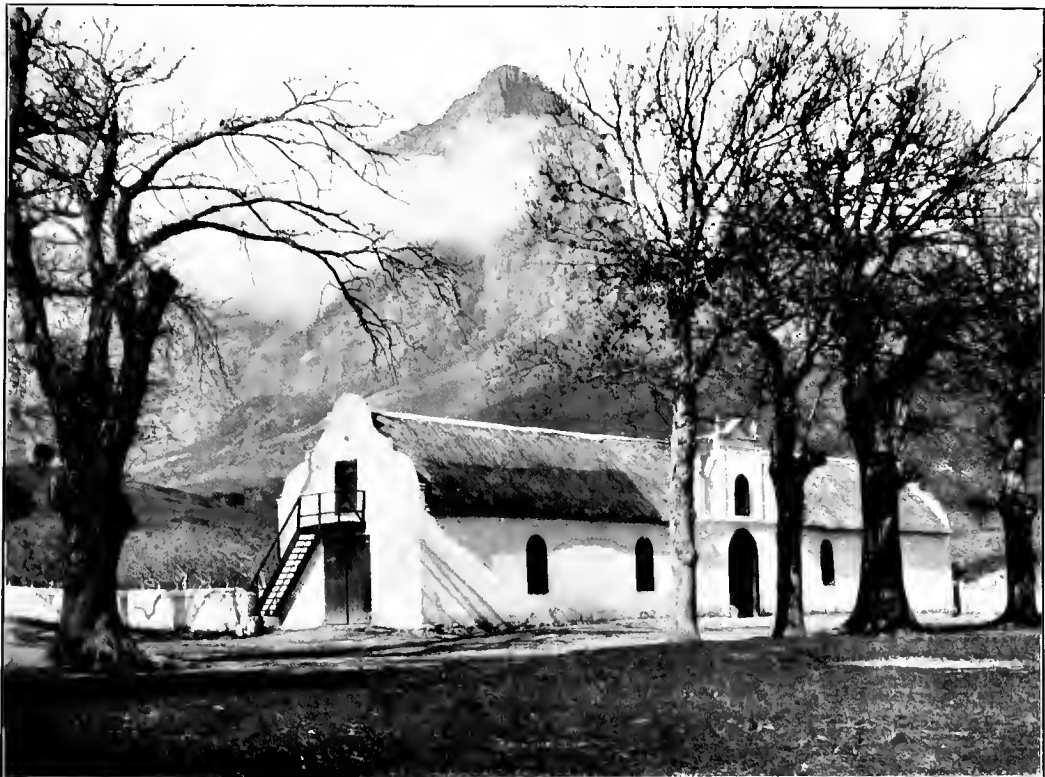
Next to it lies La Motte, granted to Hans Hendrik Hattingh in 1695. It will be remembered that he was also the owner of Speir, near Stellenbosch. There are many instances of more than one grant being made to an individual settler—probably one farm was used for stock and the other for vine-growing and agriculture. La Motte is a wine farm to-day, with wide and thriving vineyards.

Elsewhere we had found apples on every side, ruby red apples that seemed to stretch in a frieze between us and the blue mountains as we flashed past the orchards. Golden apples too, Ohenimuris of colossal girth—we talked apples at every farm, and everywhere we found that they were at that moment the pride of the fruit farmer's heart, a pride which in due season would be transferred to his peaches and nectarines.

On the hill-side to the left of the road leading from French Hoek to Groot Drakenstein lies Normandie, granted to Gideon Malherbe in 1713, and its neighbour Lormarins, recently bought by the Duke of Abercorn. Up a long avenue of glowing scarlet-flowered eucalyptus we drove to Lormarins, past a very large vineyard and into a space surrounded by one of the low white walls which divide so many of the old houses from the surrounding werf. The homestead is unspoiled, and well worth the care with which the late owner, Mr. Silberbauer, preserved it. The main gable of the fine house is interesting and the pediment has a flat top which looks as though it were meant to



LORMARINS



WINE-CELLAR, LORMARINS



LORMARINS



BIEN DONNÉ

carry a vase—the same type is to be seen on other houses in the district. There are graceful curved rust-banks at the corners of the stoep.

The ancient oaks are the glory of Lormarins. Their leaves cast a chequered shade over the homestead, past which a little streamlet chuckles over cobble-stones on its way to the guava orchard below. To the left of the house is a small pond, and in the pond an islet shaded by a weeping-willow, and half-way round the pond runs a curved wall on which is traced in raised plaster work 'L'Ormarins. 1714-1905'. The first grant was made to Jean Roi—who appears later in the records as Jan Rooy—one of the Huguenots who supported the younger van der Stel.

A rich land, this valley in the mountains, to which the exiles for their faith came more than two centuries ago. Rich in old traditions, in fair houses, in the good earth in which fruits and flowers come to rare perfection. Some other old grants near French Hoek are La Terre de Lucque, given to Matthieu Arniel in 1713, Pierre Rousseau's farm of L'Arc d'Orléans, granted in 1695, and—one of the rare Dutch names—Keer Weder, granted to H. Muller of Basle in 1695, and well known to-day as a resting-place for sojourners in the valley. There is a gay insouciance which is almost pathetic in François Retief's choice of a name for his homestead nearer the Wemmer's Hoek mountains—Le Paris! The sound of the name must have been very dear to the exile's heart to condone its inappropriateness. It lies not far from La Rocque, which was granted to Louis Barré in 1694.

In the fast falling darkness we drove back to the little cottage of Cecil Rhodes—the Englishman who saw with clear vision the great gifts which South Africa holds in her lap for the children she has drawn from many nations. And, as we sat on his stoep after dinner, in a stillness broken only by the liddle-liddle of frogs in a neighbouring streamlet, looking over the star-lit valley, where bright lights twinkled from prosperous homesteads set in wide orchards, we knew that his faith in the land was justified.

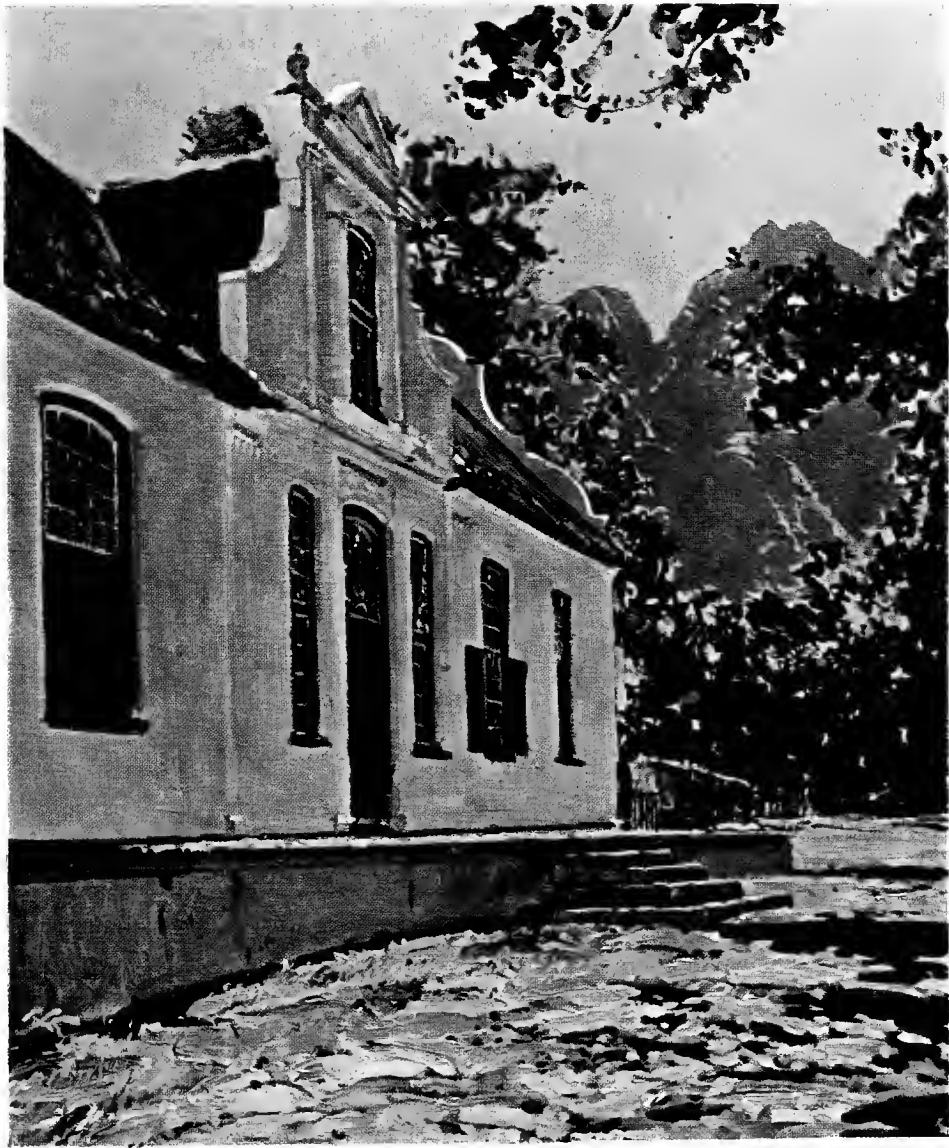
Richer than French Hoek in unspoiled homesteads is its neighbour Groot Drakenstein. That this is mainly due to the influence of Cecil Rhodes, and the men whom he established on the farms which he bought, is beyond question. The presence of one of his red-roofed sheds is an almost invariable indication that the homestead to which it belongs is in good order, its smooth brown roof intact, its teak doors and casement or sash windows unchanged from the finished plan of the man who built it a century or two ago.

Here, again, I must express the bewilderment I have always felt in reflecting that there is apparently no record of any architect in connexion with the older houses. That their fine lines and good workmanship should have been taken for granted is indicative of the high architectural standard and executive ability of two hundred years back. That the Cape owes some of its treasures of beautiful buildings to the Huguenots is suggested by the French influence which is to be traced in many of the most graceful of the gables, fanlights, and screens ; but the master-builders of that day were apparently the owners of the homesteads themselves, whether they drew their inspiration from Holland, France, or the East—or from all three sources with Simon van der Stel's Groot Constantia as their example.

Leaving the cottage in the cool of the morning, we drove through the Rhodes farm of Good Hope, past the homestead of the beautiful view—granted to Susanna Vos in 1708—and up the road that leads to the shaded little mission village of Pniel, to beautiful Rhone, one of the Rhodes farms, and unspoiled. It retains its old roof and gables, its fine floors and ceilings of yellow-wood, the brass crutch-handles on the teak doors, and the inlaid screen which divides the entrance hall from the long room behind, and can be unlatched and folded back at pleasure. The date on the front gable, over the graceful fanlight, is 1795 ; but, as I have often said, this does not necessarily indicate the age of the building. The first grant of Rhone was made to Jean Gardé in 1691. It lies in the centre of a flourishing orchard—four miles of apple, pear, peach, and plum trees—and at the side of the house is an orange grove, the trees almost breaking under the weight of the fast ripening fruit in the warmth of the golden autumn day on which we saw it. The oranges formed a glorious foreground to the mountain peaks, powdered at their summits with snow, against the blue sky.

The Dwars River irrigates Rhone and its neighbour Boschendal ; but the majority of the Drakenstein and French Hoek farms are watered by the Berg River, and were long narrow grants about a mile apart, so that no one might get more than his share of water. Behind Rhone lay Languedoc, granted to Pierre Beneset or Beneke or Benozzi—the records vary as to his name—in the same year.

Boschendal, another Rhodes farm, is as beautiful and prosperous as Rhone. There is a fine amplitude about the old house, the wide stoep that runs entirely round it, the wide curves of the gables, the rounded steps of Batavian bricks, and the generous outhouses—we do not know who built it, but that he was a man of large views we



RHONE

From the oil-painting by R. Gwelo Goodman

may feel sure. Here is another very good screen, inlaid with ebony, and yellow-wood floors, doors, and ceilings, as in Rhone. Boschendal was granted to Nicolas de Lanoy in 1690. His daughter¹ married Ary Lekkerwyn or Lecrévent, who lived in what is now Mr. H. V. Pickstone's charming house near by, and was subsequently murdered. Lekkerwyn, as the homestead is called, is an example of the possibility of adding to an old house without spoiling it—it is commodious and convenient, and has lost nothing of its old-world charm. It is filled with fine old furniture, china, and brass, acquired in the neighbourhood, recalling the manner in which the houses which now rejoice in tapestry-upholstered 'suites' were once furnished. Mr. Pickstone and his brother—who owns the pleasant, spacious old house of Delta—have helped to lift the fruit industry of the Cape from lethargy to prosperity, and the country owes them a debt of gratitude.

There are many other interesting houses in this neighbourhood. To the right, as you drive from Groot Drakenstein towards Simondium, lies the gabled house of Meerlust—originally Meer Rust—on the land granted to Jacobus van As in 1689, the neighbouring farm of Eenzaamheid being given to Arnoldus Basson on the same date.

A neighbour of Lekkerwyn was Zandvliet, where lived Hans Silverbag who murdered Ary Lekkerwyn. The record says that he was hit on the head with a stick and killed, and, when you note how closely all these early farms are crowded on the banks of the Berg River and reflect on the mixed nationalities and types of men who formed the early settlers, it is easy to believe that Willem Adriaan van der Stel spoke the truth when he said that Drakenstein was a bad and watery place, where the people lived too close to each other and could not get on. It is a rich and prosperous valley to-day, where plums and peaches, nectarines and grapes, are grown by the ton for the Covent Garden market six thousand miles away. Here men with English, French, and Dutch names are working side by side, as they have fought and died shoulder to shoulder in Delville Wood and on the plains of Flanders, moved by a common desire to uphold the honour of that South Africa which to-day is neither Dutch nor French nor English alone, but a state within the union of sister states that form the British Empire.

Some of the finest houses in the valley lie in this neighbourhood, and a little farther on is beautiful Bien Donné, most beautiful when you walk round to the back and realize that it was once the front, which is now uninteresting. Here the end-gables show French influence very clearly in their grace of curve and shell apex. Bien

¹ Probably the same Marie de Lanoy who afterwards married Hans Hendrik Hattingh.

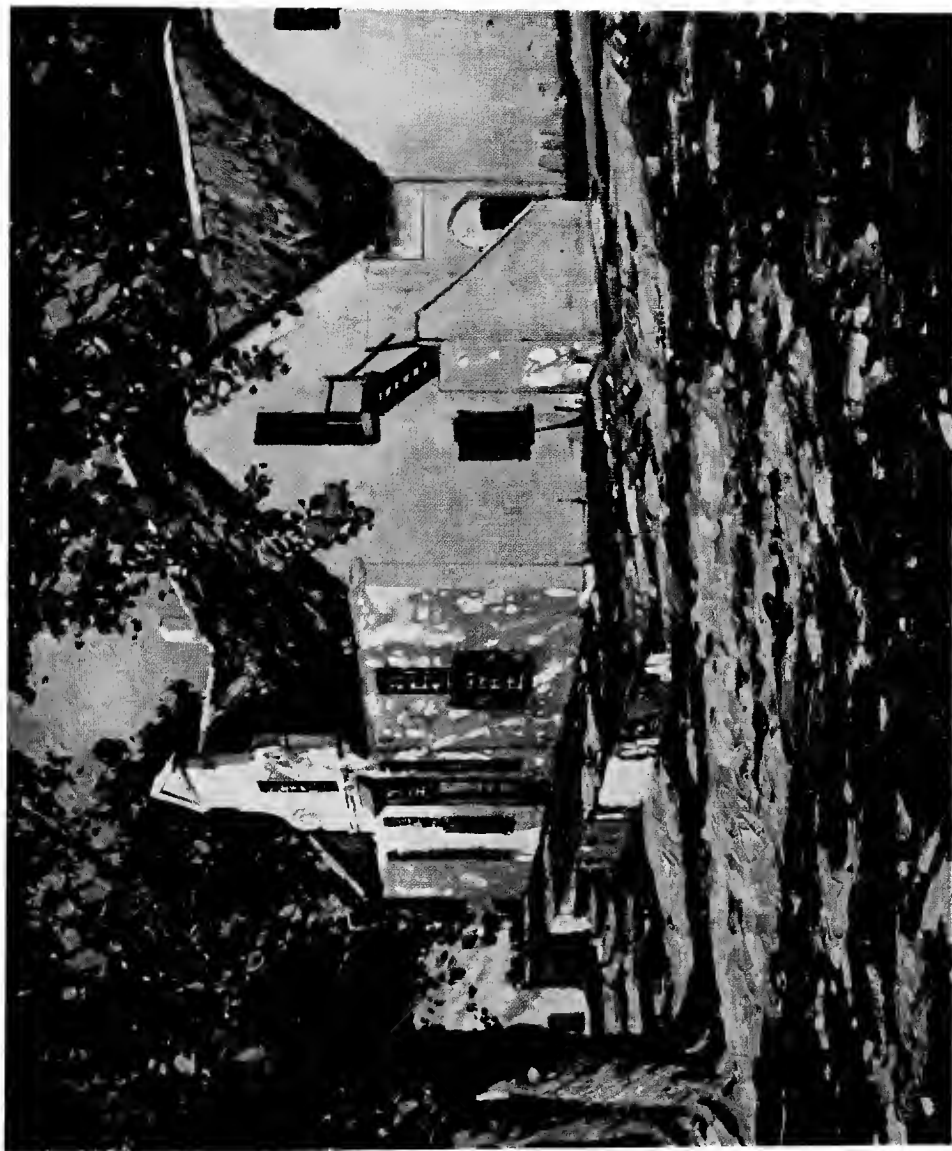
Donné was once called Watergat, and received its present name when the farm was cut into four portions to accommodate four brothers of the name of Joubert, to which family this portion still belongs. The original grant was made to Pierre Lombard in 1699. It appears on the plan as 'Zonder naam (without name) and Watergat'. Near by was van Burtel's farm Suisseland, granted in 1696.

Past a hedge, vermillion with the blossoms of *Tecoma capensis*—the Kaffir honeysuckle of Cape gardeners—we drove to Simondium, the little village named after Pierre Simond, the French minister who accompanied the Huguenots to the Cape. Here several old homesteads lie close together. One of the largest is that of Vrede en Lust, once owned by Jacques de Savoie, one of the most important men amongst the Huguenots. His daughter, Marguerite, married Henning Villon, after the death of her first husband Christoffel Snyman, and was an ancestress of the family which is now known as Viljoen, in accordance with the disguise in which many good old French names are wrapped—de Villiers being sometimes 'Filjee' and Vivier being occasionally written 'Weeweejee'. That the descendants of the Huguenots should have lost all knowledge of their mother tongue is comprehensible enough in the circumstances. It is not so easy to understand why they should have been content to forget their own names.

The homestead of Vrede en Lust is set amongst trees and cut off from the surrounding country by a low white wall. The house is simple in comparison with the very graceful outbuildings. This peculiarity, which may be noticed in other instances, suggests that the original homestead may have been destroyed by a fire which spared the surrounding buildings and have been rebuilt on economical lines. The gables of the outbuildings, like those of Bien Donné, show distinct French influence.

Rust en Vrede—also granted to Jacques de Savoie in 1694—is the neighbouring farm. It is now famed for its well-grown and thriving pear orchards. Behind it lie the vineyards of Le Plaisir Merle, formerly called Plessis Marle, originally granted to Charles Marais the elder in 1696. The pears and vines on these farms showed remarkably good cultivation, and the orange trees were laden with ripening fruit. Plessis Marle is probably the correct name, as the family of Marais came from Plessis Marle in France.

On the other side of Vrede en Lust is another La Motte, with a wide view and a modernized house. Beyond lay Frederiksberg and Berg Henegouwen. All these were granted in 1694, La Motte and Frederiksberg to Daniel and Jean Nortier and Berg Henegouwen



PICARDIE

From the oil-painting by R. Gwelo Goodman

to Jean Parisel and Jean Durand—who figures in the records as Jan Doeringh, his name being one of the earliest to lose its original French form.

On the opposite side of the road lies Daniel Hugod's Zion—a grant of 1691. I could go on almost indefinitely with a list of names, but those which have been mentioned will serve to indicate how almost wholly French this lovely valley was in its early days.

We turned off into the Klapmuts road at the little chapel which stands somewhere near the site of Pierre Simond's simple church—so simple that before long it sank to the ground, leaving nothing but a pile of bricks to mark where it had stood. There is more of mixed farming and less of exclusive fruit culture between Groot Drakenstein and Klapmuts. First in importance of the nearer homesteads is De Babylonsche Toren, near the conical hill of this name. It was granted in 1692 to Pieter van der Byl—the father of the Pieter van der Byl who owned Vredenburg in the Moddergat and joined in the denunciations against van der Stel's Vergelegen as a farm upon which 'fifty farmers might make a living'. Babylonsche Toren, now the property of Mr. Louw, must have been a very beautiful house before its gables were shorn off to accommodate an iron roof. Within are all the usual points of a fine Cape house, polished wood floors and ceilings and two very graceful cupboards built into the wall of the dining room. Near them hangs the old grant, signed by Simon van der Stel. The outbuildings are on an ample scale, and fortunately retain their gables. The old slave-bell, too, still hangs in the bell-tower, and peals out across the vineyards and the veld—it is inscribed 'Soli Dei Gloria'. A curved wall cuts off the homestead from the open country, and through the white-pillared gateway we saw the distant Drakenstein mountains turn flame colour and carmine beneath the setting sun.

On the opposite side of the main road van der Byl's ally, Jacobus van der Heyden, held the farm of Overveen, granted to him in 1690. The neighbouring homesteads of Kunnunburg and Bloemendal were held at the same period by Willem Bok and Martin van Staden. Van der Heyden afterwards owned Laatste Gift, near Vergelegen.

As darkness began to fall we came to a large vlei covered with white blossoms of the Aponogeton—the sweet-scented pond-weed of the Cape, whose flowers enter into the savoury ragoût known to Dutch cooks as 'water-uintje breedde'.

'Simon's Vallei,' we said to each other. 'And that is the homestead of the Fiscal Johannes Blesius, the large modernized house inside that charming wall. We shall be benighted—but we must see it.'

As with all the farms we had visited, whether the owners were friends or strangers, we received a kindly welcome on the doorstep, and were conducted to all the points of interest by the owner, Mr. De Kok. It is a very large farm to-day, and the house must have been magnificent before the alterations which deprived it of the gables. It still retains its spacious rooms.

Most of the land is under corn, but Simon's Vallei has wide vineyards and large oak plantations. From a rise near the house we could see the fair valley whence we had come, the white homesteads of Drakenstein and distant French Hoek gleaming in the evening light. A mellow softness touched the broad fields of stubble; the Paarl rock behind us was dark purple against the sunset sky. Dal Josaphat lay in grey shadow, but on the crests of the Drakenstein rested a touch of rose-red as day passed into night.



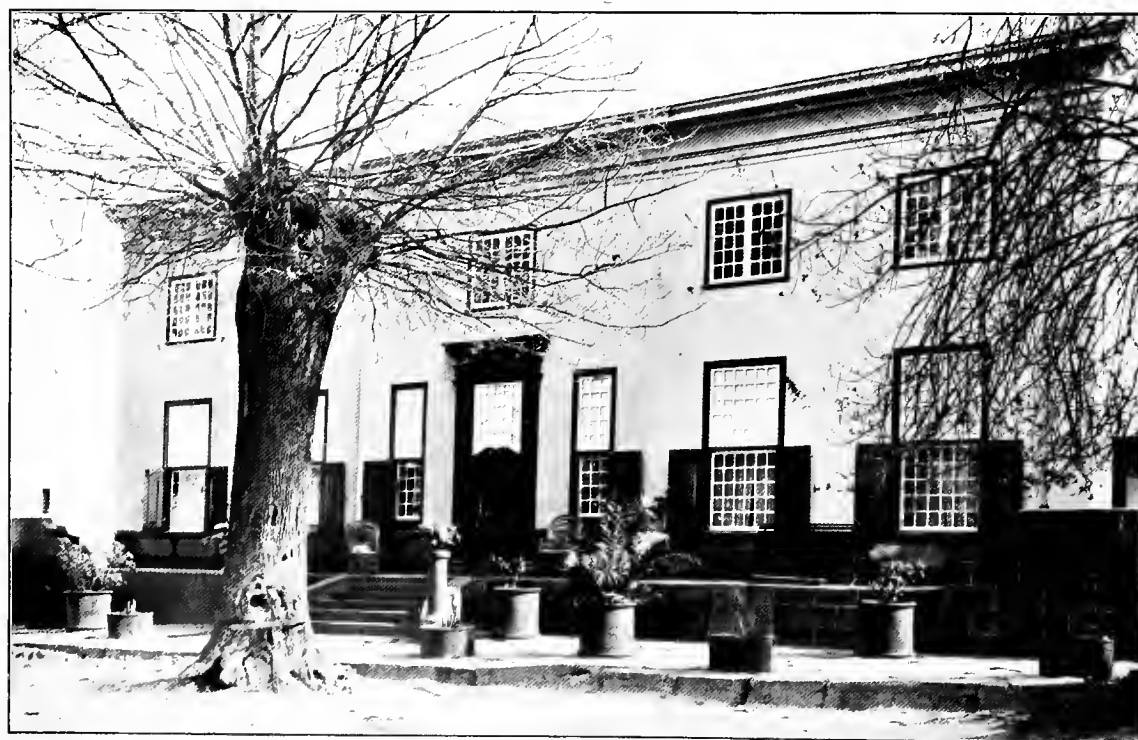
RHONE



LA PROVENCE



OLD CHURCH AT THE PAARL



VREDENHOF

XVII

THE PAARL

THE Paarl is one seven-mile-long street, approached at either end by an avenue of stately stone-pines, bordered with houses set in pleasant gardens and shaded by great oaks. They were all charming houses once, and some of them still retain their gables and old-world air, while in the little gardens flourish roses, gardenias, daphne, camellias, and many other flowers. The railway station is built on the farm De Zoete Inval, granted to Hercule des Prés in 1692.

Four early grants lie at the southern end of the Paarl, on the slope of the hill below the two granite boulders, the Paarl and the Diamant, the former giving its name to the town. Of these grants, Picardie and Labori stand in the name of the Huguenot Isaac Taillefer and his son Jean, to whom the land was given in 1691; they are now the property of Mr. Louw. François Leguat, a French Huguenot of noble birth, who visited the Cape a few years later, writes :

‘ One of these fugitives named Taillefer, a very honest and industrious man, and very dilligent in investigating all kinds of things, has a garden which may certainly be called beautiful. Nothing is wanting in it; everything is in order and as it ought to be. He has likewise an inner yard, with all kinds of aviaries and birds; also a multitude of oxen, sheep, and horses which graze the whole year through without ever being in want of food, and without the necessity on his part of being provided with hay—certainly a great convenience. This noble man receives those excellently well who visit him, and treats them grandly. His wine is the best that is obtained there, and as nearly as possible like our small wines of Champagne.’

Elsewhere he writes of the ‘ wonderful fine Landskips ’, the fine rivulets, and the little hills covered with vines, the gardens and orchards ‘ which are filled with all sorts of Fruits, Herbs, and Pulse, as well European as Indian ’. I quote from the old English translation.

How far the present homestead of Picardie is that of Taillefer it is difficult to say. It is, in any case, a very charming house with good and simple gables, and though French windows have been introduced at the front the back is unaltered. The outhouses are especially attractive.

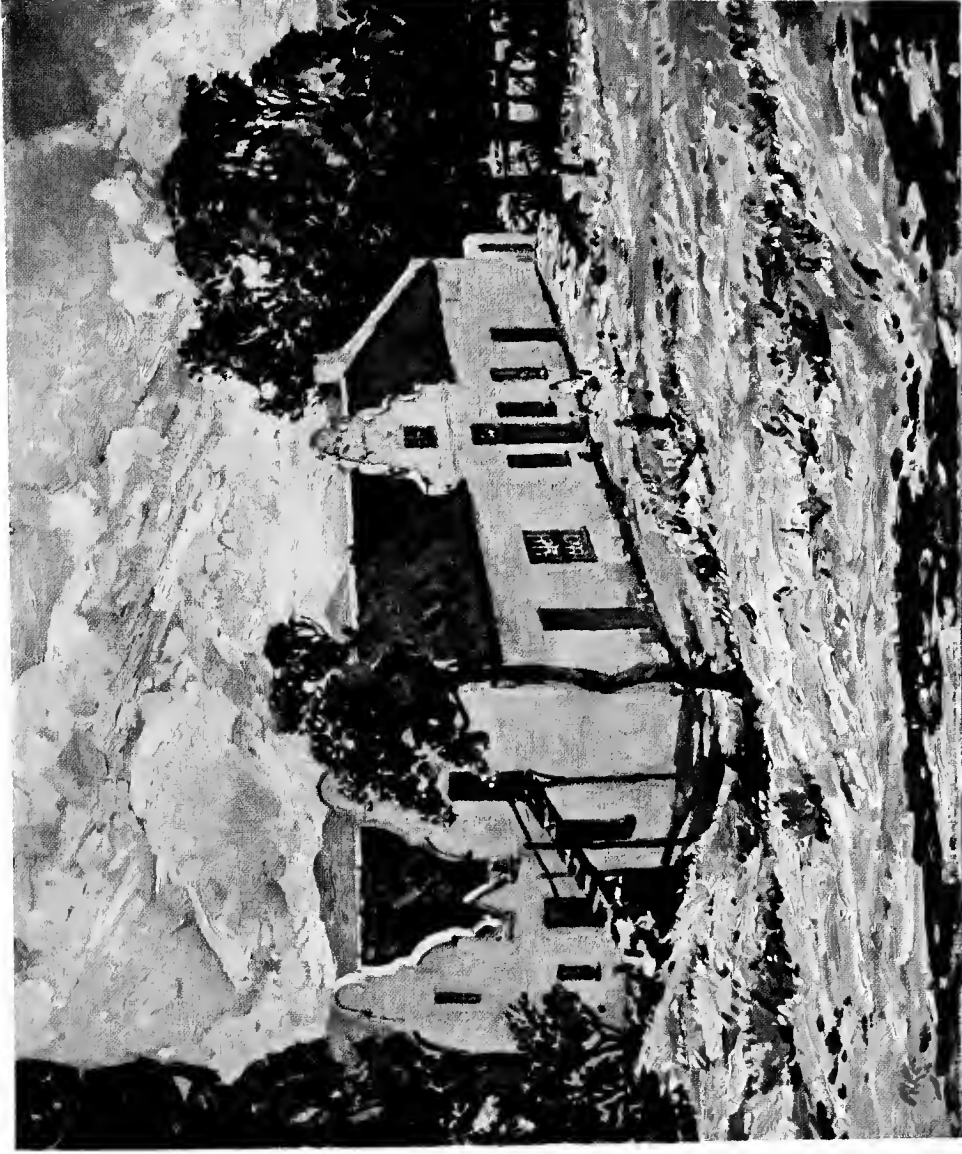
The neighbouring homestead was La Concorde, granted to Gabriele Roux in 1689. All these grants are now intersected by the main street, and the oldest house on the property lies on the road. The

fourth grant was that of Goede Hoop, given to Jean Cloudon in 1688, and of great interest to-day on account of the experiments in olive-growing which have been made on the hill-side above the homestead. Goede Hoop is approached by a drive bordered by the flaming *Tecoma capensis* and is a pleasant white house, fortunate in retaining its thatched roof. It was the father of the present owner, Mr. Minnaar (a descendant of the Huguenot Jean Mesnard of Provence), who brought thirty olive trees to the Paarl and discovered that any cutting would grow luxuriantly in the disintegrated granite of the hill-side. Van Riebeeck and the van der Stels and Cecil Rhodes had all dreamed of olive culture at the Cape, but the old farmers found wine-making an easier business and for generations continued to grow little but the vine and corn. As we walked up an avenue of olive trees laden with fruit Mr. Minnaar told us how every one had said : ' Olives ? Why, you 'll have to wait a lifetime before you see any result '—a theory which they had probably inherited from the men who said the same to Simon van der Stel—and how the trees had borne a good crop five years from the date of planting.

And as he talked we climbed up the hill-side, through olive plantations, until we paused for lack of breath and turned to look at the glory of the view spread beneath us—the ' wonderful fine Landskip ' of François Leguat. It was indescribably beautiful : blue sky, stern mountains, rich farm-lands. And I hoped that the souls of those who ' looked forward and made some beginnings ' looked down too on the wide vineyards and prosperous orchards and—above all—on the silver sheen of the olive trees as the soft wind swept over the leaves.

In the Archives are preserved the plans of the first church built at the Paarl.

This plan and the requisition for materials were sent in by the Reverend Petrus Arkelius van Aken, who was appointed minister of Drakenstein—which included the Paarl—in 1714, and lost no time in applying for a church to replace the ' simple barn ' which had fallen down at Simondium. The plan is signed ' J. Meerman '—the first Cape architect of whom we have any trace, if he *was* the architect. The site chosen was close to that occupied by the present South Paarl Church, and is described as lying ' about seven and a half minutes from the minister's house '—the latter being the once-lovely Oude Pastorie, which figures on the cover of Mrs. Trotter's *Old Cape Colony*, but has since been spoilt by the breaking down of its gables to accommodate an iron roof. In the Requesten of 1715 we find the Heemraden of Stellenbosch and Drakenstein referring to the ' large sums ' spent on building a house for the Drakenstein minister. If they could have



PAARL DIAMANT

From the oil-painting by R. Gwelo Goodman

foreseen the destructive spirit which was to animate their descendants they would probably have been more economical.

Perhaps with a view to making his peace with heaven, Henning Huysing bequeathed 1,000 rix-dollars towards the building of Pastor van Aken's church—though the Kerkeraad had considerable difficulty in getting the money from his widow. The total sum estimated for building was 15,094 rix-dollars—over three thousand pounds. In 1791 the church was enriched by an organ, the ornaments of which were executed by 'the renowned sculptor Anreith', says Spoelstra in his *Bouwstoffen*. Eight years later, in 1799, the Kerkeraad suggested that the church should be enlarged by the addition of two wings. It was, however, urged that the building 'had a mis-shapen external appearance' and that it was built of soft, bad bricks. It was therefore agreed that a new church should be erected, and the present church was consecrated in 1805, the old one being sold on the following day. If we may permit ourselves any regret for the loss of the earlier church, there is ample cause for congratulation in the plan chosen for the small church which is now the most graceful building left to the Paarl. It is in the form of a Greek cross, with curved gables at the end of each arm. The old records of baptisms and marriages kept by Paul Roux d'Orange are to be seen there.

One of the early grants at the Paarl was Nantes, in the centre of the present town, given to Jean Colmar in 1692. Parys, across the railway line, was the homestead of Jean le Roux in 1699. Bethel, also in the town, was granted to Louis Cordier in 1692, and a somewhat later grant was Optenhorst, given to Booy Booysen in 1713—it will be seen that the Dutch names in this area are few in comparison with the French—and near Bethel was Pierre de Labuschagne's homestead of Pontak, on land granted in 1694. Behind the Paarl mountain lie some old houses—Paarl Diamant, on land granted to Pieter van Nimwegen in 1692; Eenzaamheid, the homestead of the Burgher-Councillor Diepenaauw in 1693; and Lands Kroon, granted to Jan Hofsmid in 1691.

As the train winds through the lovely valley in which the Paarl lies, you see orchards and vineyards on either hand. Under the great oaks which shade them from the mid-day heat rest many of the old houses that sheltered those early settlers who took their lives into their hands when they ventured so far from all that meant safety and ease.

At the northern end of the Paarl lies the fine old house of Vredenhof, in the midst of thriving vineyards. The original grant was made to 'Frans Bastiaans' of Amiens (otherwise François Bastien) in 1699. It is a good specimen of a Cape classical house, square and solid, with high sash windows and a door flanked by pilasters. A smaller thatched house at the side is probably the earlier homestead.

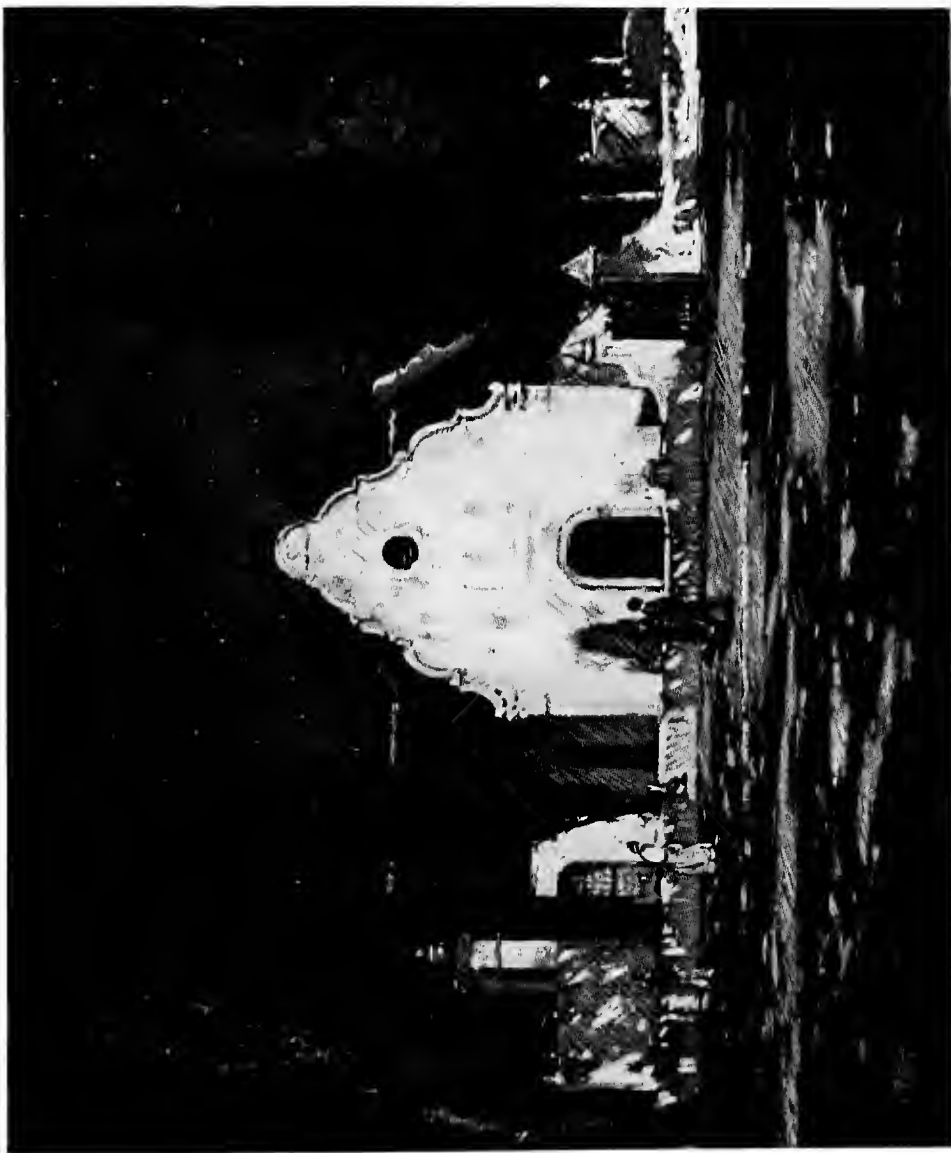
XVIII

IN THE DAL

THE earliest record of Dal Josaphat—the broad valley which lies between the Paarl mountain and the Drakenstein—is found in van Riebeeck's Journal. He records how, in October 1657, he sent out an expedition under the Fiscal Abraham Gabbema, with the object of finding the nearest tribe of Saldanhars and opening up a trade in cattle with them. Throughout his administration van Riebeeck desired to explore the interior, in the hope of finding the golden city of Ophir and the river Spirito Sancto, but Gabbema's party did not get beyond the Berg River, which they were unable to cross, nor were they successful in procuring much cattle from the natives, but they reported on 'fine lands for cultivation and good pastures along the river,' in which were many hippopotami. The Paarl and Diamant boulders and the Klapmuts hill were named by them, and on leaving these they emerged into 'a beautiful valley, about an hour's walk in length, where there was as fine grass for hay as could be found in the Fatherland.' This valley, which is described as lying NNW. of the Paarl valley, is evidently the one which afterwards received the name of Dal Josaphat, but it remained untenanted save by the wandering natives and the wild beasts and birds until, with the coming of the Huguenots later in the seventeenth century, the settlement was expanded to the northward.

There are many old grants in the Dal, and some of the houses have been touched with the blighting influence of the injudicious restorer but others retain their original charm. Many of these grants were made to French families, and to-day the preponderating names in the district are du Toit and Hugo—the modern form of Hugod or Hugot.

The road from Wellington into Dal Josaphat leads past the red roofs of Diemersfontein, a late grant of 1781 to François Marais and to-day a prosperous dairy farm. Below Diemersfontein lies Kyk Uit. The house, which belongs to Mr. Daniel Hugo, has been modernized, but it still retains the date 1749 above the door, under what was once a curved gable. It is a thriving farm, and one of the most beautiful things we saw in the Dal was a magnificent pair of



THE PAARL CHURCH

From the oil-painting by R. Gwelo Goodman

snow-white turkeys in their pride, which emerged from a thicket as we were talking, and marched stately across the werf, followed by ten or twelve turkeylings. It seemed murderous to think of Christmas dinners, as the beautiful, pagan creatures went by.

Guided by Mr. Hugo's directions we went on our way to the farms at the base of the mountains. The first in order was Kleinbosch, granted to François du Toit in 1685, on the understanding that he defended himself from the fierce hordes of Hottentots in the mountain fastnesses behind him. Mr. Hugo had pointed out the gully, now known as Du Toit's kloof, in which a great fight took place, when the Hottentots were beaten back over the mountains as far as Goudini. The places now known as Trompetter's Bosch and Rust Kraal carry in their names a remembrance of this conflict between the advancing agents of civilization and the bewildered, angry little savages who were being steadily driven back from the good arable lands of their fathers. A later grant, that of Limiet Rivier, to the north of the present town of Wellington, was made to François du Toit in 1715.

Kleinbosch is a simple little house, surrounded by modern buildings. Near by is Mr. D. F. du Toit's homestead of Naauw Bepaald, now called Valentia. The upper part of the house was burned, and has been rebuilt on modern lines, but there is a beautiful little building at the side, which may have been the earlier homestead—despite the inscription '1821'—judging by the grace of the gables and the iridescence which only age and weather combined could have given the glass in the windows. We noticed this iridescent glass in the windows of several houses in the Dal which were only built eighty years ago, and it is possible that in those instances the windows had been removed from the earlier buildings. Naauw Bepaald has belonged to the Du Toit family for several generations.

Our road to the next homestead led us away from the mountains, through prosperous orchards of plum and guava, and past acres of golden apricots.

And then, quite suddenly, we came upon the Magic Mere—not the imitation of it that other pools and lakelets have seemed to be. From edge to edge it glowed in pure, pale purple, and it was not until our driver jumped down and broke off a spike of flowers for us that we knew that we were looking on a sheet of water hyacinth—*Pontederia crassipes* is its botanical name. Drop the veriest fragment of this plant into a pond and it will spread over the surface almost as rapidly as a ripple; but even in Madeira I have never known it blossom in this comprehensive fashion.

It was only a short distance from the Magic Mere to Schoongezicht

of the Dal, a large homestead on the land granted to Abraham Vivier in 1694, the same whose descendants sometimes call themselves Weeweejee. The present homestead bears the date 1826, but there must have been a house before that time. Calamity, in the shape of fire, fell upon Schoongezicht not long ago. Fortunately, only the roof was destroyed, and some of the fine ceiling beams charred, but the graceful gables escaped unscathed. Of course, the result is a corrugated iron roof. It is waiting for those dark brown tiles which are some day to restore their dignity to the old houses—but not, I am assured by some of the owners of the houses, until they are as cheap as corrugated iron.

Schoongezicht has unusually large and lofty rooms, so large that a fine old four-poster bed looked like a speck in mid-ocean, in one of the bedrooms. It has a fine screen and wall-cupboards of teak and stinkwood, while the beams are yellow-wood. With all this it is amazing to find that the floors are only beaten clay, in a land where homesteads of any size have usually floors of polished wood or shining tiles. Perhaps the builder was a faddist, who thought clay floors sanitary. Perhaps he died before the house was finished. It could hardly have been economy, for the homestead is built on lavish lines, and there is no indication that expense was of the slightest consideration. Perhaps they were destroyed in the fire.

The sun was setting, and we regretfully abandoned further exploration in the Dal, turning our faces towards Wellington. A short drive took us past Roggeland, granted to Pieter Beuk of Lubeck, in 1692, and still retaining the charming early house at the side of the present dwelling, to lovely Nonpareil. It is a great delight to come upon a fine old house which has not been spoiled by latter-day owners.¹ Nonpareil lies on the ground granted to Pierre Vivier in 1694, though he had held it on loan since 1690. Goede Rust, not far off, belonged to Jacques Vivier.

A most exquisitely beautiful valley in which these Huguenot exiles came to rest more than two centuries ago, whether you see it in the pearly dawn or with the mountains flushed wine-red in the sunset; but none of the homesteads look out over a more radiant view than does Nonpareil. Blessed, too, is Nonpareil in its owners, and in the care with which Mr. and Mrs. Hugo have guarded the old house. There is some very good old furniture here and a graceful wall-cupboard, while over the screen which divides the voorhuis from the dining-room is a curious semi-heraldic painting. Night pressed, and we were obliged to hurry past Goede Rust, where the farmer's wife was weighing magnificent live turkeys on scales hanging from a tree—

¹ Since this was written a verandah has been added to the house.



KEURFONTEIN, LOWER PAARL



A PAARL WINE-CELLAR



SCHOONGEZICHT IN DAL JOSAPHAT



NONPAREIL

I never saw so many turkeys in one day as on that drive—through Rust en Werk, granted to Etienne Bruère in 1694, and so to Wellington as the darkness hid the distant mountains from our sight.

Most of the grants in Dal Josaphat appear to have been made between 1693 and 1695. These farms were probably not only grazing outposts as were many of the grants north of Wellington, but good lands for vineyards and general cultivation. With very few exceptions the settlers in this district were French. In connexion with the northern grants it is interesting to note that Simon van der Stel, after a visit to the inland districts in 1698, wrote to the Seventeen to say that he found that some of the Drakenstein and Stellenbosch farmers had not sufficient land to enable them to develop agriculture, grain, and cattle-rearing, and that he had provided 'about thirty such persons' each with a good piece of new land 'in the Wagon-makers' Valley at the Limiet Berg'.

This resolution explains the number of grants in this district which were awaiting the signature of Willem Adriaan van der Stel when he took office in February 1699. Gerrit Cloete for instance, who owned part of Ida's Valley, near Stellenbosch, was given the grazing land near Riebeeck Casteel, which he called Alles Verloren. De Savoie of Simondium had Kromme Rivier; Isaac Taillefer of the Paarl had Leeuwen Vallei; Blesius, and his father-in-law Abraham Diemer, had Dekker's Vallei in addition to their fine farm of Simon's Vallei—and so on.

Other grants were made to the newly arrived Huguenots, and very remote and uncivilized must the uncultivated veld have seemed to the men and women who had been reared in the fair land of France. Was it in a wistful mood, I wonder, or with the gaiety of an incurable optimism, that Pierre Cronier called his wild, uncultivated acres 'Versailles'?

In the southern portion of Dal Josaphat there are several old farms bearing French names—Orleans, Calais, St. Omer¹ and so forth—but on most of them the early homesteads have either been altered out of recognition or have been replaced by modern houses. There are, however, others which have escaped this fate, and one of the most charming old houses in the district is Nederburg, set in a valley and approached from Huguenot Station by an up-and-down road across the veld and down a hill-side. The house probably owes its preservation from corrugated iron and painted deal to the variations in the road which I have mentioned. Away from the public eye, there was

¹ Granted respectively to Matthieu Manier of Calais, in 1692, and to Armand Fracassé of Provence, in 1699, to Jean Veron of Malines, in 1699.

no temptation to 'improve' it in order to impress the passer-by with its up-to-dateness. There is cause for thankfulness that the vandals who stripped the beautiful brasswork from many of the homestead doors and the silver handles from the old armoires, and sold them in Cape Town and Johannesburg, never discovered Nederburg.

It is one of the six-gabled houses of the usual country type, and a wide stoep, paved with old red tiles, runs entirely round the building, breaking at each corner into a whitewashed gable with a curved back. The end-gables are simple and good, those over the front and back belong to a more elaborate type. Nederburg was probably built towards the close of the eighteenth century, as it bears the name of the Commissioner of the Dutch East India Company who visited the Cape at that time. An older homestead stood near by, on the site now occupied by the manager's house, but it had fallen into decay and had to be rebuilt.

The interior of Nederburg is very charming. There are the heavy-timbered ceilings and the tiled floors which one would expect to find in a house of this type. The doors are exceptionally good, even for an old Cape house, of teak panelled in yellow-wood and with very graceful handles and escutcheons of brass. There is a fine wall-cupboard which has escaped the destruction which has overtaken so many of its kin, with claw-and-ball feet and festoons of leaves and flowers culminating in a group of carved ostrich feathers. In such cupboards treasures of old cut-glass and silver were kept in the days before our people learned to give gold for pinchbeck, and to exchange the treasures which had passed down to them from their fathers for wares from Brummagem.

In the heart of a wide vineyard near the house is a bare space—the little burial-place that one finds on many of the country farms. Here the former owners of the homestead have the right to bring their dead; and sometimes through the smiling green of the vines winds a little train of mourners, carrying to his resting-place some Retief or Rousseau of the neighbourhood. A pleasant place wherein to rest, with the bokmakeries and seisjes singing overhead to the accompaniment of a little stream that ripples down to Orleans below.

There are large fruit orchards on the farm—naartjes and apples, peaches and apricots. As I looked at the broad expanse, flushed with bud and blossom, I wished again that I had beside me the little Commander to whose grit and energy the Cape owes the foundation of its fruit-farming. A few months ago I walked down Bond Street and noticed a flash of orange in a shop window. There I saw naartjes from the Cape, hundreds of them, neatly packed in punnets and

labelled—the finished product, of which Jan van Riebeeck's struggles with floods and south-easters formed the raw material.

Struggles with ignorance at head-quarters, too. It is difficult to picture the sensation with which he must have read the following directions from the Seventeen in Holland.

‘In order to have tame fruit you need only cut off a twig from a wild tree and graft it, either upon the same tree or another. In this manner the wildness is entirely destroyed.’

Towards the right of the Klein Drakenstein road, nearer to the mountains than Nederburg, is a long avenue of stone-pines which leads to Amsterhof and its orange groves. It is a picturesque old gabled house sheltered by mighty oaks of Simon van der Stel's own planting—so the owner, Mr. Hugo, told me. A golden sea of oranges sweeps almost to the door of Amsterhof, and fruit, leaf, and flower were enchantingly lovely against the blue of the sky.

The old Italians knew it, this heart-filling beauty of the orange tree, and they painted it until it came to be as closely linked with the thought of Italy as are the Madonna's lilies or the purple iris and yellow tulips of Val d'Arno. At Amsterhof the trees were breaking under the weight of oranges and citrons, lemons and naartjes. The air was heavy with the sweet scent of the white velvet blossoms in the dreamy warmth of the still South African noon. The sun poured down in his fullness on the heads of Simon van der Stel's oak saplings, grown into the stately trees which wrap the old house in their green shade.

Beyond Amsterhof lie several old farms. One of these is De Wilde Paarde Jagt, granted to Philip Fouché in 1699, and now bearing the more prosaic if less cumbrous name of Mineral Springs. The change is not for the better, nor is the anglicizing of old names in other instances to be commended, for Morgenster and Parel Vallei and Onverwacht have associations which are not retained by Morning Star and Pearl Valley and The Bush.

XIX

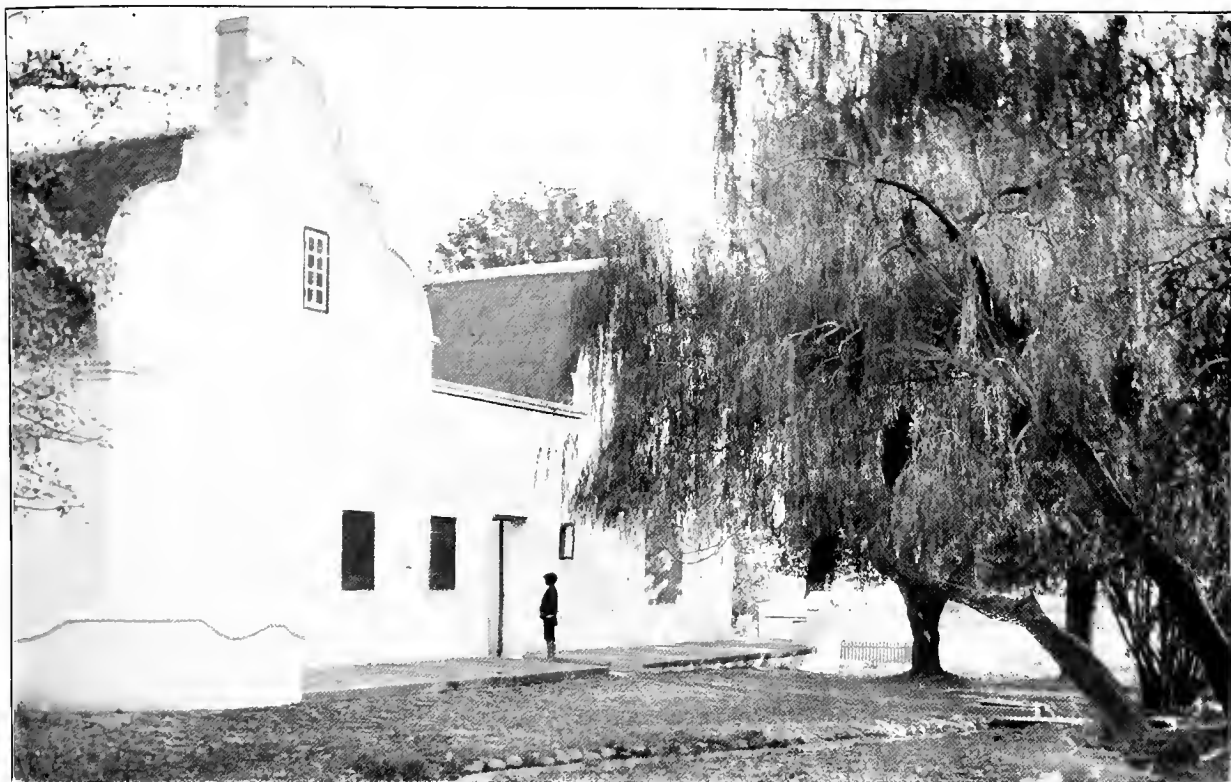
THE WAGGON-MAKERS' VALLEY

ADUN-COLOURED morning, one of those days in which a general sandy hue wraps mountains and veld in dinginess—such mountains and veld as were visible between the plantations of wattle, laden now with dull-brown seed-pods—and we regretted the two-hours' railway journey which lay before us.

But after Kraaifontein we passed into more open country, where were newly reaped cornfields, of a pensive yellow in the dull atmosphere, with the corn heaped high in rich stacks. Then a stretch of wild veld, with belated coral watsonias and red heath set amongst waving brown grasses. Then the steel-grey mountains behind Klapmuts, against which dark umbrella pines stood out in velvet richness.

And so through the Dal we came to the Waggon-makers' Valley, which to-day is known as Wellington, and the modern railway station set amongst some of the earliest farms about fifty miles from Cape Town. Many of these early grants were made to men who owned good farms in Paarl, Drakenstein, and elsewhere, as the sixty morgen of land which was the usual extent of those farms would not accommodate both vines and stock, and, as we have seen, the more northerly grants were given for grazing-land. They extended for a considerable distance along the Berg River to the north of the present town, as Simon van der Stel, in pursuance of his policy of the expansion of the country, had intended to establish a line of colonists from French Hoek to Saldanha Bay.

Some of these grants were made to Huguenots ; there is a larger proportion of French than of Dutch names amongst the first settlers in the district. Fortuin, for instance, the lovely little homestead which lies near Blaauwvlei, south of Wellington, is on the land which was granted in 1699 to Charles Marais of Plessis. How far it is his house we do not know, as the peculiarly interesting front gable, which is decorated with a pineapple device in raised plasterwork, bears the date 1810. The house is T-shaped, and the gables throughout are charming. The ceilings are formed of bamboos laid closely together over beams of yellow-wood. Three tall, sombre cypresses keep sentinel guard over the house, and from its stoep we looked across to the corn-clad hill of Groenberg, on which the sun was now



SIDE GABLES



FRONT GABLE



WALL-CUPBOARD

NEDERBURG



GROENBERG



FORTUIN

pouring a flood of golden light, while the foreground was brilliant with oleanders and crimson-patched apricots. The distant mountains had turned from steel to the rich, deep violet of midday, and as we drove back into Wellington the little gardens that border the wide streets were gay with purple jacaranda, pink hollyhocks, and roses.

Where the town now stands were originally several farms, each probably with a fine homestead, but few of the old houses remain. Of these, Onverwacht is one.¹ The Dutch Reformed Church stands on what was Champagne, the farm granted to Hercule Verdeau in 1699; some of the streets lie on a portion of Klip Vallei, granted to Philippe du Pré in the same year; while others extend over Kromme Rivier, granted to Jacques de Savoie in addition to his farm at Simonidium, probably as a grazing-ground.

Near the railway station is Olyvenhout, granted to Etienne Cronier or Crosnier or Crognet in February 1699. Many grants in the neighbourhood bear this date; the land had probably been given out on loan earlier, and the tenure was confirmed by Willem Adriaan van der Stel within a few days of his taking office.

Olyvenhout was a simple H house in the first instance, but Mr. Herbert Baker has enlarged it by building on two wings extending forward, at right angles to the front, each terminating in a simple gable. The space between these extending wings is a columned square, open in the centre to the sky after the manner of a Roman atrium, and paved with large square tiles of dull blue and red.

On the gable over the front door is the date 1797 and the initials 'M. M.' and 'A. M.', probably those of two brothers named Malan, who divided the house into two distinct dwellings by the simple device of running a wall across the middle of the long dining-room, cutting it into two T-shaped houses. This has now been removed and the room restored to its original dimensions. Olyvenhout is a good example of the manner in which an old homestead may be enlarged without its proportions being destroyed.

Not far off lies Versailles, on the outside edge of the town. This was granted in 1689 to Pierre Cronier, brother of Etienne Cronier and ancestor of the family which calls itself Cronje to-day. Analysis of Cape names shows that only a limited number of the early settlers came from Holland, others were Huguenots or sailors from countries in the neighbourhood, especially from ports on the Baltic and North Sea. (The latter brought with them many sea-faring terms: when the Cape Dutchman of to-day describes his kitchen as a 'kombuis', it is as if an Englishman were to call his a 'caboose'.) The vast

¹ Granted to Pieter Erasmus, February 1699.

overseas enterprises of Holland in the seventeenth century called for more men than the gallant little country could spare.

We had some difficulty in finding Versailles—not because it was hidden, but because we inquired for it by name. Many old homesteads are in danger of losing their original names, being usually known merely by that of the owner. In some instances the names have been anglicized, and not improved thereby.

We turned down an avenue, at the end of which gleamed a scarlet hibiscus tree against the distant mountains. It led to a pleasant, thatched house which had been built on that portion of the original farm of Versailles which was sold to Pieter Rousseau a century ago, and is now the property of Mr. le Roux. Here we were shown some fine old furniture and china, and then set on our way to the original Versailles, which we found near the railway station, much built over in the rear by the South African Dried Fruit Company and other enterprising people, but looking out over a glorious view to the north. White homesteads were tucked away in the shadow of the hills, and in the foreground was a wide vineyard, extending to the clumps of oak and poplar that marked the line of the Kromme River.

Versailles is a simple H house, and it is quite possible that it is the original homestead of Pierre Cronier, who married Susanne Taillefer, widow of Jean Gardé, and daughter of that fine old housewife Elizabeth Taillefer, who was famed for her aviaries of singing-birds. After Cronier's death Susanne married as her third husband Jacob Naudé, and doubtless made an excellent huis-vrouw to all of them in turn.

We looked out over the mountains, where the dun colour of the morning and the purple of midday had yielded to soft rich tints and a clear pellucid atmosphere, and thought of the old Frenchmen who for their faith had given up home and country and kinsfolk, and come away to the wild and savage land of South Africa more than two hundred years ago.

And then we looked to where, among the radiant green of the vines, stands the little stone guard-house of the Kromme River—one of the hundreds which are still scattered along the railway line between Cape Town and Pretoria, in which a few British soldiers guarded the bridges through the long and troubled days of the Boer War. It did not seem so very long since people in Cape Town were packing up parcels of tobacco and soap, newspapers and books, to be thrown to those lonely watchers from passing trains.

Not so very long ago ; and as we looked our thoughts went north and east and west to the men of South Africa who held her honour,

and the honour of the Empire, in their hands as they fought shoulder to shoulder against a common foe, Englishmen, Huguenots, and Dutchmen side by side.

In the town of Wellington—the modern name of the Waggon-makers' Valley—there is little of architectural interest remaining. It is a pretty place, but its beauty to-day is dependent upon its charming gardens, its wide, clean streets, and its shady avenue of oaks. A large Girls' School, the Huguenot Séminary, is its point of greatest interest, but the buildings are frankly modern, as are the houses in the town. Fortunately, it is free from the caricatures of old gables which are to be found in other places, where more architectural zeal than discretion has been displayed.

We visited many fair and prosperous homesteads in the neighbourhood of Wellington, and were received at all with kindly and courteous hospitality. Often we found ourselves sitting under a colour-print of Paul Kruger, though twice it was Cecil Rhodes, and once the King. But, whether king, president, or pioneer, the kindness and hospitality were uniform. We are one people in South Africa, whether our names be English, French, or Dutch, and all the home-grown or imported fanatics in the world will not be able to keep asunder those who love the land and would see all dissension buried, so that she may take her place proudly in the free union of sister states within the Empire.

If you drive through the town of Wellington towards the mountains and turn to the left shortly before the road ascends Bain's Kloof, you will find yourself in one of those rich and glowing valleys which the Cape hills so often hold in their stern embrace. It is Boven Vallei, shortened by local nomenclature to Bo Vlei.

Before you turn aside there is a little homestead worth noticing. It lies in a hollow, and the road to it leads down through a grove of the tall, feathery bamboos which are grown in this part of the country for ladders and fishing-rods and lend a peculiar grace to the landscape. It was in the glory of the early morning that we drove to this homestead of Leeuwen Vallei—Lions' Valley—through the bamboos and up to the oak-shaded stoep, where a lady in a frilled kapje of dazzling whiteness, who was watering the pots of daphne and camellia, told us that the initials 'D. C.' on the front gable stood for the Daniel Cellier who built the house towards the end of the eighteenth century—a grandson of the Josue Sellier of Orleans who came to the Cape with other Huguenots in 1700, accompanied by his wife Elisabeth Couvret. There are many of the old Frenchman's descendants in this district, just as in the Paarl half the inhabitants are called de Villiers and in

the Dal Hugo. I do not know what he would think of his name under its transmogrifications of Sillier, Cellier, Cillier, Cilliers, Silje, Solje, Zulje, and Cillie; oddly enough, the last is the most common form.

Leeuwen Vallei was granted in 1699 to Jacques de Savoie, perhaps as a grazing station, his principal farm being at Simondium. To one side of the present simple and picturesque house is a gabled building, used at one time as slave-quarters, but probably the original homestead.

The road which turns to the left a little farther on leads to Nabij Gelegen, granted in 1712 to Arij Kruisman by the Governor de Chavonnes. Here are oaks of a great girth and height; it is difficult to believe that they are only two hundred years old. Past the front of the homestead clucks a little streamlet, and the red sea-fish that a boy was washing in the water struck a sympathetic note of colour against the milky walls and brown thatch of the beautiful homestead. Nabij Gelegen is threatened with a corrugated iron roof, so we were glad to see its charm while yet it remains. The iridescent glass of the windows is set in teak frames with rounded tops; rounded, too, are the corners of the stoep, with curved rustbanks in white plaster. The interior is very spacious, and still retained one of the tall old grandfather clocks, over whose dial a little fleet rocks back and forth to mark the passing seconds. Nabij Gelegen—'Lying near by' is the literal translation of the name—is a singularly beautiful and harmonious homestead at present. When it is under an iron roof much of its distinctive charm will have vanished.

Still farther up the valley lies the finely-situated house of Welvenpas, on the land granted to Claude Marais in 1699. It is the property of Mr. Daniel Retief, to whose family it has belonged since 1754. The original homestead was lower down, but of this house only a few cobblestones remain and the great rose-apple and loquat trees which were planted near it by the mother of Piet Retief, whose memory is linked with Dingaan's Day. For the little child who was born in this smiling valley and grew up among its vines and orange-groves became the leader of that brave band of voor-trekkers or pioneers which pushed its way northward until it reached the heart of Dingaan's empire, in the wild, unknown Zulu country. The fate of those pioneers is known to every one, for the story has come down to us from an English missionary who was at Dingaan's kraal and saw the massacre of the Boers from his camp on a neighbouring hill.

Warned by a messenger from Dingaan of the impending murder, he had not a moment in which to frame a remonstrance, for the awful tragedy was even then in full progress, and he could only cover his face with his shaking hands. When a joyful shout proclaimed to

the little mission station that the work of treachery was accomplished he drew his little flock round him and read with lips that were quivering with horror how 'He that dwelleth in the secret places of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty', and through the psalm which was, he says with simple piety, 'so singularly and literally applicable to our present situation that I could with difficulty proceed with it'.

Now turn to the story of Dingaan's Day, when the massacre of Piet Retief and his companions was avenged after the manner of the smiting of the Amalekites. It is the voor-trekker Charl Celliers who tells us how he and some others mustered a force of four hundred men to go out against the powerful Zulu nation under Dingaan. How the four hundred made a solemn vow to God that if He should grant them the victory the day should be consecrated and kept holy as a Sabbath and that the vow should be binding on them and their children after them. How the Zulus made four efforts to take their camp by storm, but were repulsed, and fled, so that the word of the Lord might be fulfilled, who said: 'By one way shall your enemies come, but by the blessing of the Lord they shall fly before your face.' And how not fewer than three thousand of the Zulus perished on that day, so that the river was dyed red with their blood.

Of all these things we thought as we stood on the stoep of Welvenpas, for it chanced to be Dingaan's Day, and our host, Piet Retief's grand-nephew, was preparing to drive down to Wellington to attend the solemn gathering held to celebrate the day that saw Dutchmen and Englishmen fighting side by side to break the power of Dingaan.

'How far is St. Helena from a little child at play?'

How infinitely far the man who was dragged to his death by the order of a savage chief from the little boy who had grown up in the fair and pleasant valley at our feet!

The homestead of Welvenpas has in some respects been modernized, though not so drastically as many others. It is magnificently placed, and its white gables, the work of a Malay slave whom tradition credits with having built most of the gables in the valley, shine out amongst the green of the surrounding trees. The present house was built for a younger brother of Piet Retief, and took three years to complete; it has one very unusual feature in a screen of 'Cape Syringa' wood,¹ very beautiful when polished. Welvenpas is celebrated for its orange groves, but it also has fine vineyards and orchards.

The soil of this district is well suited to the growth of citrus fruits.

¹ *Melia Azedarach.*

Still farther in the mountains lies Doolhof, granted to Jacques Potié in 1712. This was the farm of the 'Mynheer Latigaan' to whom Lady Anne Barnard paid a visit in 1797, and where she was horrified at the number of oranges eaten by the little daughter of Landdrost van der Riet of Stellenbosch. In the list of the Requesten in the Archives there is an appeal from 'the agriculturist Jan Latigaan' asking for a plot of arable land adjoining his old land 'named Het Doolhof, behind the Groene Berg'.

There are other interesting farms in this neighbourhood, but in some cases the homesteads have been so altered that they do not repay a visit. Not far off is Leeuwen Tuin, granted to Daniel Jacob in 1712, Patatta's Kloof, given to the Huguenot François Retief in 1700, and several others. Slang Rivier, in this district, was granted to Louis Fourie by Willem Adriaan van der Stel in 1699, and a portion of this farm to which its owner, Mr. Taylor, has given the name of M'Foshola, is a thriving apricot farm. As we turned out of the long eucalyptus avenue which leads to the homestead light and colour seemed to flash from the ground—it seemed unbelievable that there could be so many apricots in the world as were spread out to dry on a wide expanse of grass.

It was a wonderful picture. Over the white wall which surrounds the werf—the expanse of grass—nodded a jacaranda laden with great clusters of purple flowers, while a magenta bougainvillea at its side struck a note of primitive barbaric colour. Behind the wall were the orchards and above them rose a hill golden with corn and holding fair white homesteads in its folds. And everywhere the wonderful light and colour of the apricots. Under an old oak, whose spreading branches formed a shady tent, women and boys were at work, splitting the apricots in two and spreading them out on wooden trays. As each tray was filled it was carried into the cool old wine-cellar near by, to await its turn in the sulphur furnace—the sulphur fumes intensify the deep golden colour of the fruit and purify it of any lingering insect life. The effect when the trays of sulphured fruit were set out in the blinding sunshine was that of a meadow of colossal marigolds.

And still the stream of Pactolus poured in from the orchard, as waggon after waggon came in from the orchards laden with brimming-over baskets, and turned and went their way in quest of more.

M'Foshola—the Horn of Plenty in the Kaffir tongue—is worthy of its name, and is a striking illustration of what modern science has done for agriculture. The ground for these fruitful trees was prepared by blasting with dynamite, and a liberal supply of fertilisers worked in, despite the grave disapproval of many of the old farmers of the



FORTUIN, FRONT GABLE



ONVERWACHT, FRONT GABLE



ONVERWACHT



OLYVENHOUT

district, who thought the new methods revolutionary and almost impious in the manner in which they ran counter to the old way of planting apricots in poor soil with no fertiliser.

The Cape is a land of romance. The high hills, the fair white homesteads set amongst their oaks, the flowers of veld and mountain—all are beautiful. But perhaps her greatest romance is the rich reward which Nature yields to the man who wins to success through difficulties and over obstacles, in her sun-kissed apricots, her peaches and melons and grapes, and her red and amber plums.

The Bo Vlei road rises behind the town and curves through the fine pass known as Bain's Kloof, high up in the mountains, between wild olives and protea bushes, rocks fringed with maiden-hair fern and crowned with spicy geraniums. From the summit of the pass it sweeps down to a wide plain in which lies the town of Worcester, founded by Lord Charles Somerset, ostensibly as a magistracy, but—if rumour is to be believed—actually as a shooting centre. The drostdy which he built for one or the other of these laudable purposes is interesting as an example of a house which is as unaffected by Dutch traditions as was its builder. Lady Duff Gordon, who drove to Worcester from Villiersdorp, writes: 'Such a journey! Such country! Pearly mountains and deep blue sky, an impassable pass to walk down, and baboons and secretary birds and tortoises . . . Our inn is a very nice, handsome old Dutch house . . . The drostdy has a pretty old Dutch garden, and the house is a very handsome one.' Wellington, she says, resembles 'a true Flemish village', and of the wonderful Wellington sunsets she writes: 'The sun went down, and the high mountains behind us were precisely the colour of a Venice ruby glass—really, truly, and literally—not purple, not crimson, but glowing ruby-red, and the orange trees below looked intensely green and the houses snow-white.'

XX

THE LAND OF WAVEREN

BLUE and gold—gold and blue—it was a dream-world through which we passed in the midday heat. Rich corn lands on every side, for we had left the vineyards and peach orchards to the south. On either hand—only limited by the azure mountains—were rolling plains, where wheat and oats lay heaped in high stacks in a proximity which indicated the richness of the harvest.

And after a time we came to a narrow pass between the mountains, where the flowers at the side of the railway line yielded to rocks and queer succulent plants, and the sun shone down fiercely on the red sand of the slopes. Through this defile the train wound for a few minutes and then slid forward into a round plain—where was more heaped-up gold, and where the mountains that surrounded it were as blue as the sky.

Thus we came to Tulbagh—to that Land of Waveren which Willem Adriaan van der Stel saw for the first time when he rode over the Roode Zand Pass in 1699. Enchanted with the loveliness of the district and the fertility of the land, he determined to found here a settlement. In his letter to the Seventeen at Amsterdam, in which he speaks of this project, he writes of the bad harvest of that year—so bad ‘that we could not supply the ships with fresh bread. More corn than ever had been sown by the people, but continuous rains, cold, and subsequent droughts and heavy south-easters, caused almost a complete failure. Moreover, the caterpillars, which had never been seen here before, destroyed all the ears of rye.’

Then, with that optimistic faith in the country which was one of the van der Stel characteristics, he turns to a description of the

‘beautiful valley about 18 or 20 hours’ distant from the castle, and situated beyond the Ubiqua mountains. It is situated between the Ubiqua and another hitherto unnamed very high mountain range, extending, as is supposed, towards the sea behind Hottentots’ Holland. It has a breadth of four hours on foot beyond the Roode Zand, which is merely a steep pass going over the aforesaid Ubiqua mountains. He found it a pleasant and serviceable country for agriculture and pasture, and decided in course of time to colonize it with some households who might be willing to go there, especially from Drakenstein, which, as a rule, is

a bad and watery country, and where the larger number of people live too near each other and cannot get on, so that many of them have been impoverished ; and also with other inhabitants from this government and such as may from time to time be sent out from home—the more so as, as far as has been observed, very few Hottentots are found in that region, who, through poverty and mortality, have very much diminished in the neighbourhood, and ruined themselves by their inveterate laziness.

‘ And as these good regions, some miles in length, have hitherto had no name for Europeans, as well as the forests which are situated in the bends before and in the aforesaid basin between these high mountain ranges, in which there are many tall and stout kinds of trees very fit for timber for those who may settle there (though difficult to work), the Governor, in order to distinguish them properly in course of time from other districts, has named the aforesaid valley the Land of Waveren, and the unnamed mountain ranges Witsenbergen . . . It is also the Governor’s intention to do this because he believes and plainly sees that within a few years he may increase the Company’s stock there and elsewhere, under the blessing of God, at such a rate that he will be able annually to provide the Company’s ships, hospital, and slave quarters from the increase.’

I do not suppose that the Company received this letter with any gratification, for its policy in regard to the Cape was a limited one. But they raised no objections, and the settlement of Roode Zand was founded in the Land of Waveren. Grants of land were made to such colonists as were bold enough to venture into the new country. Amongst them were some of the Huguenot *émigrés*, and farm names such as Montpellier and Rhone indicate that they carried with them their love of the lost mother country. There is a jaunty air about some of the Dutch names in this neighbourhood—Vrolykheid, for instance, and Twee Jong Gezellen, a homestead built by two old brothers.

It will be remembered how the Stellenbosch and Drakenstein farmers refused to come to the assistance of the Roode Zand settlers, forgetting, says van der Stel, the help which they themselves had received.

So the new colony was founded, and forty-three years later was built the Pastorie and the beautiful little church which still stands at the entrance to the village. Much of the material employed was sent out from Holland. Lovely in its very simplicity, the church has two plain hipped gables, most of the ornamentation being concentrated on the gable over the door. The date on it is incorrect, and only records a later whitewashing and ‘doing-up’. I should like to see the original date (1743) restored. The white wall which surrounds the building is a charming feature of old Roode Zand Church. It is not straight and decorous as you would expect a church wall to be,

but breaks into graceful curves and ripples and is adorned at intervals with vases that are almost Greek in their outline. The wall had a very beautiful gateway once, with the curves that no modern builder achieves, but the searing finger of the Boer War touched Tulbagh—as Roode Zand is called to-day—and the graceful gateway was demolished. At the same time the fine pulpit was destroyed. The inlaid sounding-board which still remains is a witness to the loss which this destruction entailed.

For many years the old church has been used for concerts and other secular purposes.¹ Its fine old brass candelabra is fitted with paraffin lamps, which shed their light on a raised stage. When I saw it there was over everything that indefinable air which hangs about a concert room by daylight, and yet to me it was even more truly the House of God than the newer building over the way, for no latter-day indifference can wholly efface the tradition that lingers round this old-world church. The device on the old church seal—a fortress set amongst mountains—was the inspiration of a poet. So, too, was the motto 'Rond om Jerusalem zyn bergen'. I wonder if the hills that lie round about Jerusalem were more lovely and pleasant to the eyes of that old poet of an old people than were the hills that encompass Tulbagh to mine.

The space between the church and the Pastorie is now covered by houses and streets; but once upon a time it was an unbroken property, and no one was allowed to shout or make a noise in the neighbourhood for fear of disturbing the minister at his studies. The Pastorie still stands in large grounds shaded by oaks which must have been planted when the settlement was in its infancy. It retains much of its old charm, and the alterations which were made to suit the taste of the last generation could be rectified with little difficulty. Fortunately, the fine old windows and massive teak door are still in existence, though not in the place of honour originally assigned to them. The old brass knocker has been removed to the present front door. It is in the form of a sphinx's head, and is, I should think, late eighteenth century in design, perhaps of the period of Thibault, who built the Drostdy near the village in 1804. Fine brasswork was executed in the Castle armoury in the old days—I have before me a komfoor bearing the date 1770, which was made there. From the days when the van der Stels got into trouble with Batavia for detaining skilled craftsmen on their way to the East, the Cape was famous for its brass- and ironwork.

¹ Since this was written a movement has been begun by Lady Beck which has for its object the preservation of the old building and its restoration as a Volks Museum.

To one side of the Pastorie is a graceful gabled building, apparently of the same date as the house. It was once a wine-cellar—probably in the time when the ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church farmed their own lands and vineyards. To-day it is used as a Sunday-school, and the appreciative care of the kindly and courteous occupant of the Pastorie has kept the old building unspoiled.

I wish that we could say as much for all the old houses in the village. The Cape is still waiting for the man who will understand how to adapt the early buildings to modern requirements without destroying their charm. Incidentally, it is also waiting for some one who will make brown tiles which will come within a measurable distance of the cost of the corrugated iron. There is much to be said for the point of view of those who argue that thatch is inflammable, besides becoming yearly more hard to procure. It explains—though it cannot beautify—the glittering roofs which have turned old-world villages into the semblance of a mining camp. The obvious remedy is to find the best substitute for thatch, when circumstances render its removal imperative. Shingles are open to the risk of fire, but brown tiles which would be safe would last practically for ever.

Modern Tulbagh has apparently made up its mind that if it cannot have everything it will at least have cheerfulness. I have never seen so many gay verandahs anywhere—one that specially lingers in my mind was painted in wide stripes of red, blue, green, yellow, and white, and over the front of the house a magenta-purple bougainvillea blossomed luxuriantly. Some old houses are, however, still left in their original simple grace.

Until 1804 the little settlement continued to be known as Roode Zand, and the rich valley as the Land of Waveren. But, after the restoration of the Cape to the Batavian Government, when Holland evidently hoped that the seal of her ownership was set on the land for ever, the Council of Policy determined to cut the large division of Stellenbosch into two portions, the northern half to be known as Tulbagh in honour of the Governor who had administered the affairs of the Company from 1751 to 1771. Hendrick Lodewyk Bletterman was commissioned to inspect the district and select a site for the Drostdy—the residence of the Landdrost, Hendrick van de Graaff being subsequently appointed to this office. Louis Thibault, the engineer officer to whom the Cape owes much of its fine architecture, was instructed to draw up plans for a building which should include a hall in which the sessions of the Heemraden could be held. Unlike most Governments, the Council of Policy, under the guidance of the

Commissary General de Mist, does not appear to have let financial considerations stand in the way of a fine Drostdy. We are told that £8,000 was voted for the purpose—a large sum, even in these days. The site selected by Bletterman was the farm of Rietvlei, about two miles from Roode Zand Church; it belonged to Hercules du Pré, to whom the sum of £1111 was paid.

The Company received full value for its expenditure. Thibault was a Frenchman, and I can well believe that when he found himself in that golden valley, and looked on the blue hills in the crystal atmosphere, his heart turned to the southern districts of the land of his birth. To Provence, to that fair Italy across the border, and to the white houses and shady loggias which lie in the shelter of the Alpes Maritimes. So he planned the Drostdy at Tulbagh with large, high rooms opening into each other by means of folding doors, and he built a wide loggia with rounded arches, each framing a scene which would be Italy if it were not South Africa. I know of no house which for spaciousness and airy coolness can compare with the Tulbagh Drostdy. Through the loggia you pass to a wide hall, fifty feet long and twenty feet in height—the height of the rooms throughout the house.

The front door is of cedar, otherwise the woodwork everywhere is teak and yellow-wood. In this hall stands the table upon which the Articles of the Capitulation of the Cape of Good Hope to the British forces were drawn up in the year 1806—the document which was signed by Baird and van Prophelew at the Treaty Cottage near Cape Town. On the right of the great hall lie a morning-room, a long dining-room and a library. On the left is a large drawing-room, terminating in a fine wall-cupboard with sliding doors. In this room hangs a crystal chandelier which was once at old Groote Schuur. When these five rooms are thrown into each other by means of their folding doors they form a suite of dignified reception-rooms in which the Landdrost of a century ago dispensed the hospitality for which the Cape was famous. Beyond the drawing-room are two large guest chambers, and two parallel sets of rooms—divided from the front by a long corridor—afford more bedrooms and kitchens and pantries.

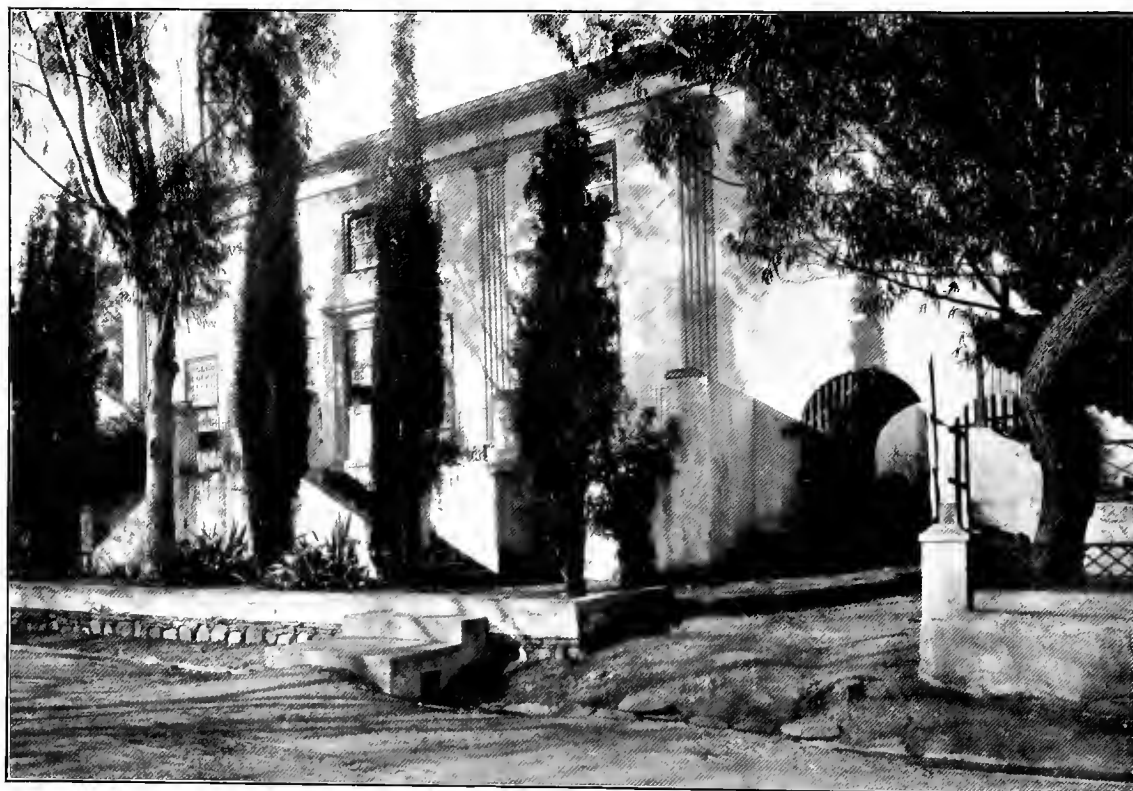
The ground-plan of the house is unlike anything else at the Cape. Thibault was apparently unfettered by any convention in designing it, and the result might well be copied by architects of to-day. Large and lofty rooms, ample accommodation, and not an inch of waste space anywhere. Below the dwelling is the prison—cold as charity in the hot December mid-day. Here prisoners were kept, awaiting



THE OLD DUTCH CHURCH, TULBAGH



THE DROSTDY, WORCESTER



HOUSE IN TULBAGH, ASCRIBED TO THIBAUT

their trial by the Landdrost and Heemraden in the hall upstairs—there is an icy stone bench, which I hope they shunned if they valued their health, and there are heavy iron gratings to the windows. To-day the prison forms an admirable refrigerating-room for fruit and butter and for the light Witsenberg wine, which is made not far from the Drostdy. The exterior of the house is very dignified, with simple end-gables, and the arms of Ryk Tulbagh above the entrance, with the date 1804. It was the last great work begun by the Dutch East India Company at the Cape and the first completed by England. For the Drostdy was still unfinished when Landdrost van de Graaff received a letter from Janssens—written from Hottentots' Holland—in which is indicated the hope that the British occupation would not spread beyond Cape Town. This hope was dashed to the ground by a dispatch received two days later from the new Government.

Until the time of Lord Charles Somerset the Landdrost continued to rule the Land of Waveren from the Tulbagh Drostdy. But it did not take the new Governor long to discover that the affairs of the district would be conveniently directed from a more northerly station—there are those who say that he wanted a hunting lodge in a part of the country where game was more plentiful—so in 1823 the decree went forth that a Drostdy should be built in the new village of Worcester, and Thibault's stately house and the wide lands that surrounded it fell from their high estate and were leased out to neighbouring farmers. For more than eighty years the Tulbagh Drostdy lay forgotten by the world, and little by little the dust of oblivion settled on it until it became a forlorn and dreary barn—the great hall a winnowing-place for grain and the pleasant rooms a hunting ground for rats.

In the face of its well-ordered, dignified air to-day, it is difficult to realize the destruction that all but overtook it. Sir Meiring Beck said that it was his wife's pity for the old house that induced him to buy it. Never was a lovely virtue more amply rewarded—for the old Drostdy stands to-day in all its early beauty, the iridescent windows shine from Thibault's teak frames, the tiled floors have been repaired and polished, the cedar door freed from its incubus of paint. And by a strange coincidence, this good work has been carried out by the descendant of the man who was the first minister of old Roode Zand Church, the Reverend Arnoldus Mauritius Meiring, a learned divine of French descent who came to the Land of Waveren in 1743 and died there in 1757.

We sat in the loggia as the setting sun dyed the mountains rose-red and carmine. From north to south, from east to west, the Land of

Waveren was golden with corn. Over the undulating country crept heavily laden wagons on their way to Tulbagh Station, there to load up the trains with forage for those less blessed districts to the north, where the drought had pressed heavily. Through an archway I could see the Drostdy garden gay with late roses. Below the roses was a vineyard, each emerald vine heavy with fruit, and to my left were laden apricot and mulberry trees.

The sun sank lower, the rose-red on the mountains deepened to purple as we sat on the threshold of the house that had been begun by the Dutch and finished by the English.

XXI

SWELLENDAM

THE sun was setting as we drove into the charming old town which was called after Hendrik Swellengrebel, the Governor under whose jurisdiction the district 'beyond the Breede Rivier' was separated from Stellenbosch in August 1742. Johannes Rhenius was the first landdrost, and in the following year the site of the Drostdy was chosen, after much inspection and deliberation. The old builders had a genius for finding beautiful situations for their houses, and it was in one of the most lovely spots of a lovely district that the white walls of the Drostdy rose. Yet another year passed before the new town received its name; perhaps the authorities were torn asunder between the rival claims of Swellendam and Rheniusdorp, but the Governor carried the day and followed the example of Simon van der Stel when he founded Stellenbosch and bequeathed to it his name.

The Drostdy is a fine thatched house with large cool rooms and yellow-wood floors and ceilings. The plan differs from that of most Cape houses, the front door being where the back door would be in houses of the square U type, the space between the two projecting arms forming a paved entrance court.

Here, no doubt, Swellengrebel came from time to time to watch the progress of his bantling town. Probably he was sometimes accompanied by his nephew Sergius Swellengrebel, the Secunde of the day, who married an English lady named Anna Fothergill. The records in the Archives contain a list of the clothes which she bequeathed to her sister, many of which no doubt the fine rooms of the old Drostdy saw when she accompanied her husband and his uncle. Mention is made, amongst other things in this voluminous wardrobe, of a white satin embroidered gown with its apron, a blue satin gown with bright flowers, a green and brown silk gown and apron, many other gowns of chintz, velvet, and silk, of flowered gauze mantles, sable muffs, velvet calottes, lace ruffles and caps, a pelerine trimmed with ermine, one of black velvet lined with blue 'pelang', another of satin lined with fur, fifteen fans, golden waistbands, embroidered aprons trimmed with gold fringe, twenty petticoats,

sixty-seven handkerchiefs, and a long list of underlinen and other wearing apparel. If we may judge by her clothes Anna Fothergill was dainty and bewitching and must have turned all the heads in sober Swellendam a hundred and seventy years ago, when she arrived from Cape Town with her trunks of modish gowns.

To her son she left innumerable silver trays, candlesticks, coffee pots, jugs, spoons, and forks in shagreen cases, nineteen family portraits, two statues, strings of pearls, diamond, sapphire, emerald and ruby rings, shoe buckles, earrings and sleeve buttons. His father's wardrobe descended to him, and a blue coat shot with silver and a white one with coloured flowers are enumerated in the will, besides chintz nightgowns and other garments. There was a velvet horsecloth embroidered in silver, with holsters to match, silver pistols and spurs, quantities of linen and many other things. These fine things all went to Batavia, and Madame's clothes to Jenny Fothergill in England, but probably the old Drostdy saw her in her white satin embroidered gown and her husband in his blue coat shot with silver.

Swellendam is laid out in long streets of houses, many of which retain their picturesqueness, though others have succumbed to the corrugated iron fiend. De Oude Huis is the charming, rambling thatched house of the Resident Magistrate, and in its garden tall olive-trees and custard-apples were growing side by side. There are other picturesque houses in the town—the old schoolhouse, for example, and the charming though now tin-roofed building next to the Dutch Reformed Church which has the type of gable peculiar to Swellendam. The apex of this gable is a circular disc, and in one instance is embellished by a clock face. On the other side of the house is the Pastorie, now modernized.

I am genuinely sorry that I cannot sing the praises of the new Dutch Reformed Church, because of the courtesy with which we were received and shown the church silver which had belonged to the simple building in which early Swellendam worshipped, and which has made way for the church which is *più grande ma non più bella*. There is a fine Bible with silver clasps, dated 1756, an ink-stand with pounce-box and wafer-box, presented in 1798, and a chalice with an old inscription.

There are many old houses in and near Swellendam, less finely finished and elaborate, perhaps, than those nearer Cape Town, but with a simplicity and grave dignity which make them very attractive. Such a house is Glen Barry, which stands among shady oaks at the foot of the Langebergen range. When we saw it the autumn tints of the surroundings were deepened by an orange tree laden with ripe



OLD GATEWAY, SWELLENDAM CHURCH



WINDOW IN THE OLD CHURCH, SWELLENDAM

fruit in the foreground, and a Pride of India on which the leaves were as brilliant as those of a Canadian maple in the fall.

Near by is another old house in which lived Mr. Bergh, a descendant of the Olof Bergh who was captain of the garrison in the time of the van der Stels. He showed us the portraits of Olof Bergh and his wife, contemporary drawings in pen and ink on parchment, with the effect of fine steel engravings.

From Glen Barry we drove back through the long streets of old houses to the other side of Swellendam, where, standing out white against the green of the hill, was the homestead of Klip Rivier, a fine house with thatched roof and unspoiled windows, yellow-wood floors and ceilings and a very unusual gable above the entrance. There was a smiling air over the landscape, from the tobacco plantations, pink with blossom, to the ostriches feeding in the rich green of the lucerne fields. Ostrich feathers and dop brandy are two of the chief industries of this neighbourhood, both somewhat precarious; but though the former may fluctuate with fashion I am disposed to agree with the member of Parliament who said that he believed that the only females that would not wear ostrich feathers were the Barbary ostriches imported by the Government.

At Barrydale we were shown piles of feathers of amazing width and length, while the floor of the large room in which they were stored was hollow and lined with concrete for the storage of dop brandy—which smelt uncommonly noxious. The excise on spirits having just been raised, we found our hosts in very low spirits, and even disposed to consider in a meditative manner my query whether the fiery alcohol under our feet might not be employed to greater advantage as spirit in the perfume factories for which South Africa is waiting than in dragging down the natives from manhood to something lower than an animal. Good brandy is made in South Africa, as well as bad, and some of the best comes from this district, but the particular brand which was drawn up in a bucket for us to see and smell did not lay claim to any virtues.

Barrydale is a little village which lies amongst the mountains and is approached from Swellendam by a Pass of Passes. Early one morning we drove eastward until we came to the picturesque mission station of Zuurbraak, and here we turned into the hills and sped up, up, up, winding our way through a majestic pass between crags and peaks which sometimes stood out in a stern bareness which was almost awful, and sometimes were jewelled with scarlet heath and green with ferns as the water from the summits oozed out of their sides. After a day amongst the mountains we drove back to Swel-

lendam as night was falling, and slept soundly under a roof that was covered from end to end with a gorgeous canopy of *Bignonia venusta*—the Golden Shower of the Cape gardener.

We left Swellendam early next morning with regret, turning for a farewell look as we climbed the hill behind Klip Rivier. The fair valley was asleep beneath its mantle of gold and dark-green leaves, and at the base of the blue mountains a soft white cloud hung as lightly as a bridal veil. In another ten minutes we were in an arid, rhinoster-clad land, where not a tree or house was visible—the sand-veld of which the dwellers in the rich districts from which we had come had spoken with lofty pity. Grey rhinoster as far as the eye could reach; the little bush whose only use seems to be to provide fuel where wood or coal cannot be procured. The rhinoster smoke that curls out of many country chimneys has a pleasant fragrance, not unlike that of burning peat, and perhaps some day—when the value of the economic plants of South Africa is better understood—we may see the rhinoster compressed into fuel-bricks which will easily be carried from place to place, as a substitute for coal. It is said that rhinoster means good land and bad farming, so perhaps the sand-veld is less arid than it looks. After some time the grey of the landscape began to yield to the green of very young corn and barley, and we came to prosperous farms and wide wheat lands which seemed to stretch from horizon to horizon. One of the farms that we passed was Appelkraal, granted to Ferdinand Appel, one of the chief movers against the younger van der Stel. He also owned Geduld, near the Eerste River, and the land on which are the hot springs of Caledon, famed for their curative powers in cases of rheumatism. We passed through Caledon itself at dusk, but did not linger, for our bourn was Villiersdorp in the hills, still twenty miles away.

Villiersdorp lies on the knees of the mountains, as remote from the bustle of the world below as if it were in Mars. A tinkling stream outside the windows lulled us to sleep, a tinkling sheep bell woke us in the morning, and we looked out with the subconscious expectation of seeing Swiss chalets and snow mountains. The thin, high air deepened the illusion—but only for the moment; Villiersdorp is wholly South African—oak-shaded streets and little thatched houses. There is a pleasant, rambling Oude Huis, belonging to the Botha family, and a little way out of the village is Mr. Roux's fine farm of Radyn, with its eighteenth-century homestead and its old mill.

XXII

OLD CAPE-DUTCH FURNITURE

THE furniture of the old South African homesteads has sometimes been accused of heaviness. This charge is frequently found in the writings of travellers who visited the country towards the close of the eighteenth century, and no doubt it lacked charm to eyes attuned to the delicate intricacies of Chinese Chippendale or the grace of the gilded fauteuils and canapés of the French workers. Captain Robert Percival, writing of the Cape in the last decade of the eighteenth century, says :

‘The Dutch are remarkably neat in their houses. The floors, stairs, and furniture are kept exceedingly clean and highly polished ; the floors of their halls, and most of their ground floors, are of broad square tiles, highly polished, glazed, or painted, and the wainscoting adorned with looking-glasses and branches. Their sitting-rooms are very neat and clean ; the furniture, indeed, is usually clumsy in the extreme, and looks very awkward, though kept in excellent order. Several houses, however, are not inelegantly furnished.’

The furniture, however, is massive and dignified rather than clumsy, the outlines are frequently beautiful, and there is a quality of honesty which is singularly attractive—shoddiness is wholly absent from design or execution. Cape furniture drew its inspiration from two widely differing sources—Europe and the East—and if we are to understand the old Cape cabinet-maker we must realize something of the conditions which produced him. In the Netherlands, solid furniture, made for the most part of oak, dove-tailed and pegged together, and enriched with a certain amount of carving or marqueterie, was to be found in every respectable burgher’s house. Tables and chairs were often made with cabriole legs, sometimes ending in claw-and-ball feet, sometimes with plain feet, sometimes carved on the knee. Spiral legs had been introduced from Spain and Portugal into the Low Countries during the Spanish domination of the sixteenth century and were frequently employed on the more elaborate articles of furniture. Spirals are also found on Indo-Portuguese furniture, and made their way into England in the time of Charles II, perhaps from Holland or, with equal possibility, direct from Bombay, when it fell to England as part of the dowry of Catherine of Braganza.

The fashion had spread early from Portuguese Goa, for it is to be seen in the Dutch furniture made by native workmen in Ceylon during the seventeenth century, and it may have come to the Cape either from Europe or the East.

Amongst the French refugees who fled into Holland in the reign of Louis XIV were cabinet-makers and other workmen, and their influence is clearly to be traced on the architecture and furniture of Holland. During this period and later Holland, in her turn, exercised a powerful influence on the cabinet-makers of England, many Dutch workmen being taken across the Channel in the time of William and Mary.

But much as the early Cape workmen owed to Holland it must not be forgotten that Table Bay was the half-way house to the East, and that lacquered cabinets and clock-cases, fine oriental china, tables, and chairs of ebony or black rosewood, and many other beautiful things found their way to the Cape in the old days of the Company. In Ceylon, then a Dutch possession, good furniture was made by native workmen, working with local woods on Dutch or oriental models. Some of this furniture bears a strong resemblance to that made at the Cape during the same period. We find many references in the Archives to Cingalese, Chinese, and Malay prisoners and slaves who were sent to the Cape towards the close of the seventeenth century, and it is probable that amongst them were carpenters and cabinet-makers. When we remember that the van der Stels detained at the Cape skilled workmen on their way to the East it will be seen that there was no dearth of good craftsmen in the country.

The woods at their command were for the most part wholly unlike those of which their Dutch models were fashioned. The principal woods found in the Cape forests were yellow-wood and stinkwood, and of these much of the furniture was made. Yellow-wood is a species of *Podocarpus*, and is of a golden shade, toning to brown with age. At one time the trees grew freely in the neighbourhood of Cape Town, but the forests were cut down by the early settlers and much of the wood used as building timber and for other less worthy purposes, despite van Riebeeck's efforts to preserve it. There are several species of yellow-wood, the one known at the Knysna—where there are still fine forests—as the 'upright' yellow-wood, *P. Thunbergii*, being a more golden colour than the 'Outeniqua' species, *P. elongata*. Stinkwood actually possessed a charming name, being known to eighteenth-century botanists as *Oreodaphne bullata*. It is now called *Ocotea bullata*, but it is not too late to



Armoire in Cecil Rhodes's bedroom
at Groote Schuur



Armoire of Stinkwood at Verlegen



Chairs and Table



Armoire of Stinkwood, Ebony
and other woods



Armoire of Stinkwood, with Casuarina
panels and silver handles

FURNITURE IN THE KOOPMANS-DE WET HOUSE

substitute its old botanical name for the ugly appellation bestowed upon it, quite undeservedly, by the early settlers. When first cut the wood has a curious odour which disappears as it dries. It is a fine brown wood, not unlike teak in colour, but breaking sometimes into lighter shades.

Among the less widely known Cape woods is that of the wild olive—*Olea verrucosa*—known locally as olyvenhout. It is a fine hazel-brown, striped in a darker shade, and forms beautiful panels when contrasted with the richer brown of stinkwood. Rooi Els, *Cunonia capensis*, is still found in the Cape forests, though in greater quantities at the Knysna. Its wood is very like that of pencil-cedar, of a fine red colour. That of the Witte Els, *Platylophus trifolius*, resembles the Outeniqua yellow-wood. 'Hard pear,' *Strychnos Henningsii*, is a light brown wood with a delicate ripple on the surface, and perhaps the most interesting of all these less widely known furniture woods is Beukenhout, *Faurea arborea*, one of the Proteaceae, which bears a certain resemblance to satin-wood, though paler in colour. All these woods are natives of the Cape, and most of them have been used in the manufacture of furniture, but with the expansion of South Africa new woods have been brought in from the north, and, in the Union Buildings at Pretoria, Rhodesian mahogany¹ and teak, so called, have been used for panelling and furniture with very fine effect. Deal has been brought from Europe for building and other purposes from the seventeenth century up to the present time, but European woods were seldom used for furniture. On the other hand, we read of ebony being sent as ballast in the ships homeward-bound from Mauritius, and other furniture-woods came from Ceylon and the East Indies. Chief amongst these was teak, which was used for ceiling-beams, floors, window-frames, shutters, and doors as well as for furniture. Teak—*Tectona grandis*—is a native of the East Indies, Southern India and Burma, and few timber trees can compare with it for durability. The oily nature of the wood protects it from the attacks of borers or other insects and when once seasoned it is practically indestructible. Planks of teak have been found in old Indian rock-temples, in a state of perfect preservation, having been in position for over two thousand years. The wood takes a rich golden-brown when polished, and retains an aromatic scent long after it has been cut.

Several varieties of rose-wood—*Dalbergia*—came to the Cape from the East, as did satin-wood. The finest ebony came from

¹ Rhodesian mahogany is the wood of *Afzelia quanzensis*, and African teak that of *Adina Galpini*.

Ceylon and Southern India, and some old furniture is made from the ebony obtained from *Diospyrus quaesita*, another native tree of Ceylon, where the wood is known as Calamander—from the Cinghalese word *kalumindrie*, meaning black-flowing. This wood is easily identified; it is closely grained, very hard and smooth, and is of a fine brown colour striped with black, while Coromandel wood, which is sometimes confused with it, is black, mottled or striped with yellow.¹ Camphor wood was also brought from the East.

It will be seen that there was no dearth of material for the old Cape cabinet-maker, even though oak and walnut were withheld from him. Teak, yellow-wood, stinkwood, ebony, rosewood, satinwood, and camphor wood were not unworthy substitutes, and a rich red wood was used for panels and in other ways which has been identified as an Indo-Malayan species of casuarina. Marqueterie, which found such favour in Holland at the beginning of the eighteenth century, was never used at the Cape. When we remember how this art deteriorated, until 'Dutch marqueterie' came to be almost a term of reproach, it must be acknowledged that the Cape had cause for thankfulness. Whether the standard of taste set by the van der Stels and others preferred plain, fine wood to coarsely cut butterflies and birds set in every possible place, or whether the early workmen feared the effect of a warm climate on marqueterie, the result was unpretentious simplicity. It was not lack of ability, for the partition-screens in many homesteads are delicately inlaid with ebony and other woods or with ivory.

The most important articles of furniture were the massive wardrobes or armoires. These are usually Dutch in design, bulging out below in *bombé* curves, and frequently resting on solid claw-and-ball feet. Others show French influence, but whether this made its way through Holland or was brought to the Cape by the Huguenots it is difficult to say. Some fine armoires are to be seen in the Koopmans-de Wet house in Cape Town, which has been acquired for the country with much of its old furniture. It stands on the land granted to the Burgher Reynier Smedinga in 1701, and has for the past century been the residence of the de Wet family, coming into the market on the death of Mrs. Koopmans and her sister Miss de Wet. The finest armoire in the house stands where it has stood through the lifetime of several generations. It is made of stinkwood with

¹ This distinction between Calamander and Coromandel wood is to be found in a book on modern cabinet work by Messrs. Wells and Hooper, but it is a point upon

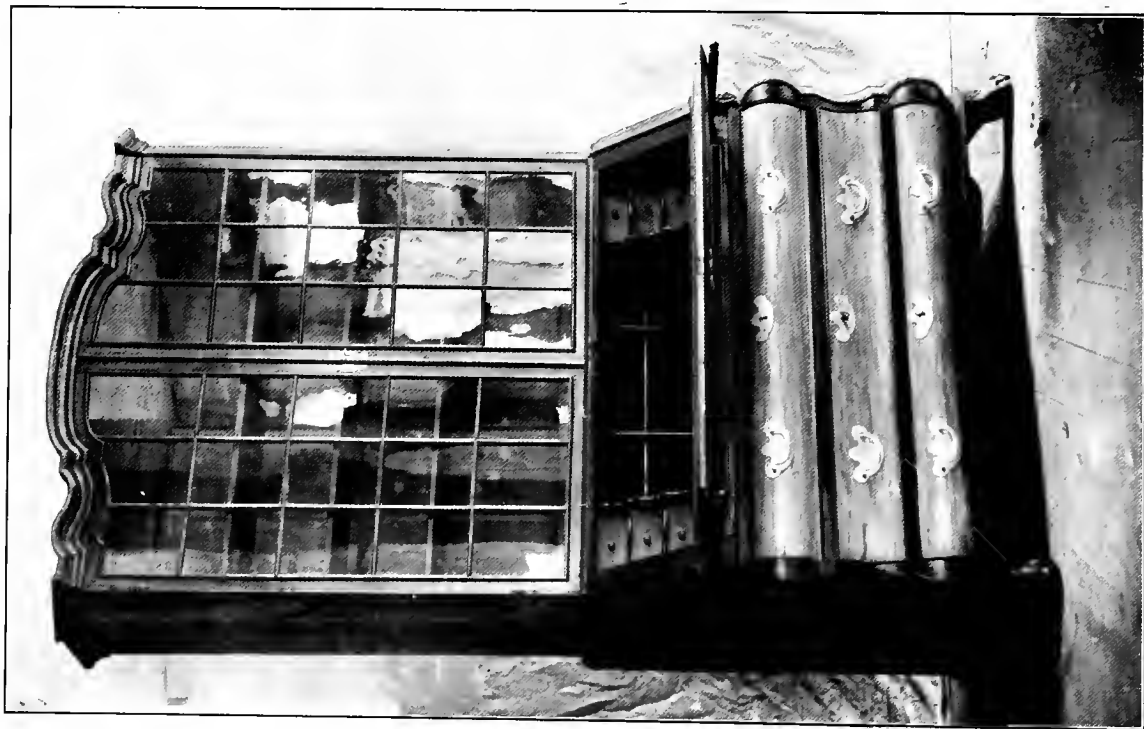
which authorities differ, some regarding the two names as interchangeable terms for the same wood.



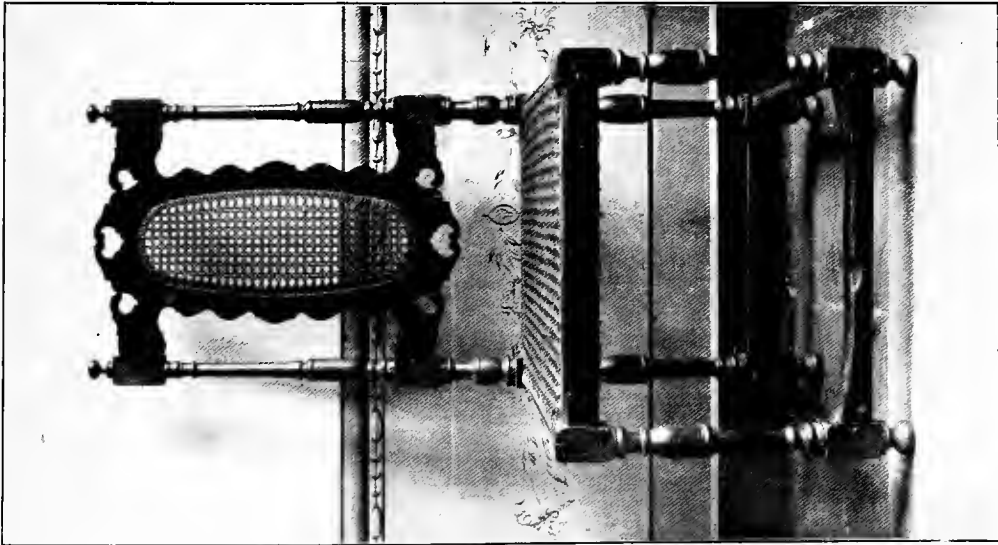
An eighteenth-century cabinet



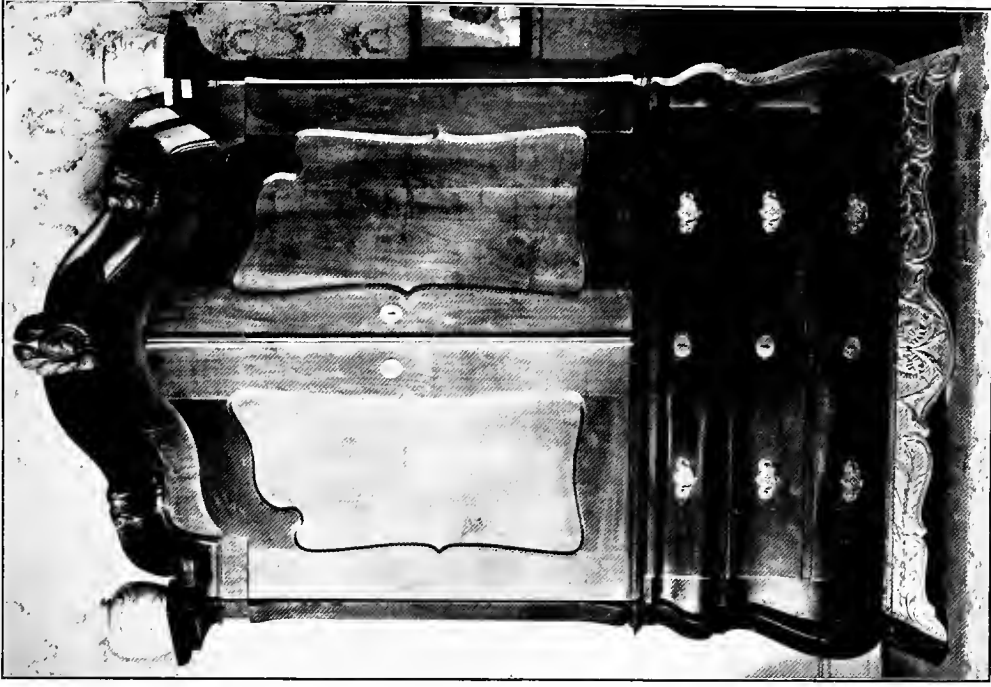
Cabinet of Calamander wood inlaid with ebony. Made at French Hoek in 1730. Belonging to Mrs. Mackeurtan



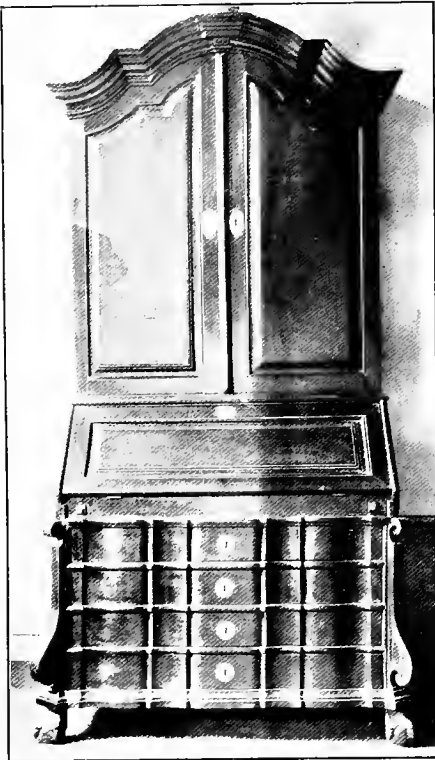
Writing-bureau and cabinet made at the Cape in the Eighteenth Century
Stinkwood inlaid with other woods



Eighteenth-century Stinkwood chair



Old armoire at Bergvliet



Eighteenth-century writing-bureau and cradle-chair in the
Koopmans-De Wet house



Camphor-wood chest with brass fittings at Groote Schuur

wide panels of casuarina or beef-wood, called by the Dutch in the East Indies paardenvleesch-hout. It is not unlike rosewood in grain and colour. The curves are graceful and flowing; it rests on finely carved claw feet and retains the old silver handles which have been replaced by knobs on the furniture in many of the country homesteads, the silver handles having been wrenched off and sold to passing pedlars. Another good armoire in the Koopmans-de Wet house has straight sides and folded linen fronts to the drawers, while the base and feet are of ebony, elaborately carved. The armoires are usually gable-topped, sometimes with flat spaces on which stood jars of blue Nankin or Delft.

Many of the old Cape-Dutch chairs look, at a casual glance, like the work of Chippendale, and are sometimes ascribed to his influence. But, as we know, Chippendale's early work was strongly influenced by the Dutch type of furniture introduced into England by William and Mary, and it is far more probable that the Cape workman of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries took his examples direct from Holland than that English chairs were copied at the Cape at that time, though they undoubtedly served as models later on, after the British occupation. These chairs are usually of stinkwood—though occasionally of teak—and are for the most part simple in design. Chairs of another type, with spiral legs and slender twisted bars down the back, though made at the Cape of stinkwood, are practically identical with those made in Ceylon, in the seventeenth century, of black rosewood or ebony. This graceful style was introduced into England in the time of Charles II and is characteristic of much of the charming Jacobean furniture which preceded the simpler Chippendale. Carved rosewood and ebony chairs are found. Probably they were brought from the East, but it is possible that they were made at the Cape. Amongst the Oriental slaves and prisoners were clever workmen, and there may be truth in the tradition which assigns the manufacture of these chairs to Chinese prisoners on Robben Island. Chairs of the Louis-Seize type, but made of stinkwood, are to be seen at the Cape, probably copied from those brought out by the French regiments towards the close of the Dutch occupation. It is on record that a good deal of furniture was brought from France at that time.

The rust-banks or settees are a charming feature of the old Cape furniture. There is a great variety of type amongst them, some resembling a low wooden bench with a back like that of a simple Chippendale chair, some having an elaborate frame enriched with carving, and seat and back of fine cane work, others resembling two or more chairs joined together, with one pair of arms. An elaborate

example in teak, with twisted splats and legs, is almost identical with a type of rust-bank made in Ceylon two hundred years ago. Sometimes the rust-banks have caned seats, but the seats are frequently made of interwoven strips of leather called riempje, or of solid wood.

The old tables were massive, usually of teak or stinkwood. An occasional example of the gate-leg type is found, and there are others with solid, twisted legs. Charming small tables with cabriole legs are common—there is a pair in the Koopmans-de Wet house with tops of satinwood, edged with ebony, and graceful ebony legs with claw-and-ball feet. Fine tables of Indian rosewood, usually with gadroon edges, are often found; but it is supposed that these were made in India on English models and brought down to the Cape in the days of the long furlough, when the Cape Peninsula was used as a sanatorium by large numbers of Anglo-Indian officials, who were permitted to draw full pay when within a certain distance from India but could only go home on half pay. Little guéridon tables with twisted columns were common in every old Cape house; they are usually made of stinkwood.

Massive dower-chests were made at and brought to the Cape by the old settlers. They are made of teak, camphor, or stinkwood, and vary in size from the solid, brass-hasped chest which would fit into a trek-wagon to things of great beauty which now hold pride of place in the hall or voorhuis. The brasswork on these chests is always very fine. A few examples with ironwork are to be seen, but these were probably brought from Europe. In considering the massive character of the chests, and of Cape-Dutch furniture in general, it must be remembered that the rooms which accommodated them were large and lofty—rooms in which spindle-legged tables and chairs would have looked grotesque, but which formed a dignified setting for the great armoires and solid presses.

The writing-bureaux partake of this solid character, and are frequently curved after the manner of the wardrobes, the drawer-fronts being often fluted in a folded-linen pattern.

Fine old wooden four-post beds are to be found, sometimes with carved pillars and very like those common in England during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—allowing for the use of teak or stinkwood in the place of oak. In the Koopmans-de Wet house there is a small graceful bed made of stinkwood, without pillars.

I have referred to several examples of old Cape furniture from the specimens in this house, as they are accessible to every one. Here, too, may be seen examples of the china and glass owned by a family which guarded the treasures of its forefathers and refused to go



Stinkwood rustbank, Groote Schuur. 18th century



Ebony chair, Groote Schuur

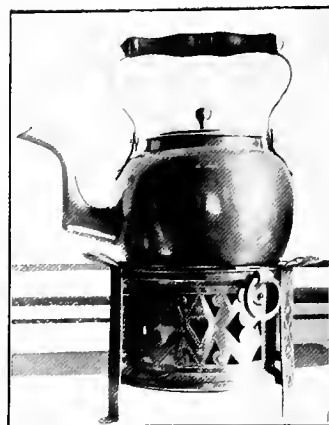
Similar chairs were made in Ceylon in the 17th century by native workmen under Dutch direction



Chair at Groote Schuur



Brass coffee-pot and komvoor



Copper kettles and komvoors



Silver drawer-handle. One of a set on a wardrobe in the Koopmans-De Wet house



Copper wine-measure



Copper three-legged pot

astray after the strange gods of Birmingham and Tottenham Court Road.

Of late years there has been a revival in the art of furniture-making in South Africa, stinkwood, yellow-wood, and the native Rhodesian woods being used. From this modern development it is interesting to turn back two hundred years to Kolbe's notes. 'Stinkwood is beautifully clouded,' he says, 'and the Cape-Europeans have Presses and Tables and several other very useful and very ornamental Pieces of Household Furniture made of it.' In 1772 Thunberg writes of 'Geel-hout (yellow-wood), a pale yellow wood used for making tables . . . Stink-wood is used for writing-desks and chests of drawers.'

XXIII

THE DECORATIVE ARTS

AMONGST the workmen detained at the Cape by the van der Stels were clever artificers in metal. Holland of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was famous for her brass-workers, and in the pictures of Pieter de Hoogh and Vermeer we see the shining brass candelabra, warming-pans, and fire-irons which were the pride of the huis-vrouw. To its great possessions in the East Indies, as we have seen earlier, the Company sent out skilled metal-workers, men who could reproduce in the ends of the earth the household plenishings of Holland, and we can well believe that their detention at the Cape, half-way to their destination, by the men who loved the little land at the foot of Africa and built beautiful houses in it, was not to the taste of those who were awaiting them in Batavia.

Not from Europe only did the workers in metal come. As we have also seen, many slaves and political prisoners were brought from the East, and that some of these were famous for their skill in metal-work we know. It is, therefore, not surprising that the hinges and hasps, the door-handles and locks, on the old Cape homesteads were little inferior to those which may be seen at Delft or Amsterdam.

At one time there was an armoury in the Castle, where useful and beautiful things were hammered and forged. Here, it is said, much of the work was done under the direction of Anton Anreith and Louis Thibault in later years, and here, probably, much of the iron-work of the Castle itself was made. The armour has vanished, no one knows where, but scattered over the land are household utensils of great beauty which we may suppose were made at the Cape.

In a land where fire-places were almost unknown—apart from the kitchen—we need not look for the graceful fenders of eighteenth-century England or the fire-irons which afforded such scope to the art of Holland. In their place are komvoors—small braziers of great diversity and much beauty of design, in polished and perforated brass or, more rarely, in copper. There are also the little tessjes which, filled with charcoal, were put inside the stoofjes or wooden boxes on which a Cape-Dutch woman of past years put her feet when



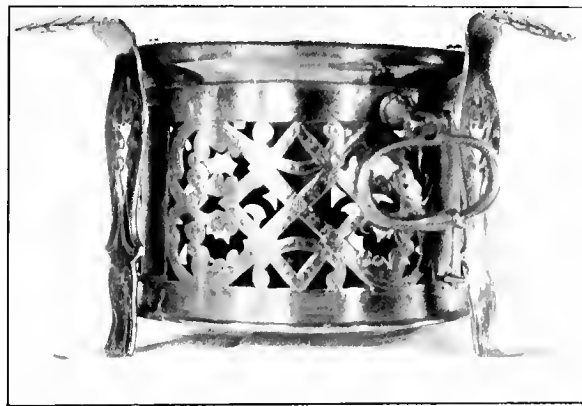
Brass komvoors



Cuspidor in white metal



Stoofje in carved wood



Brass komvoors



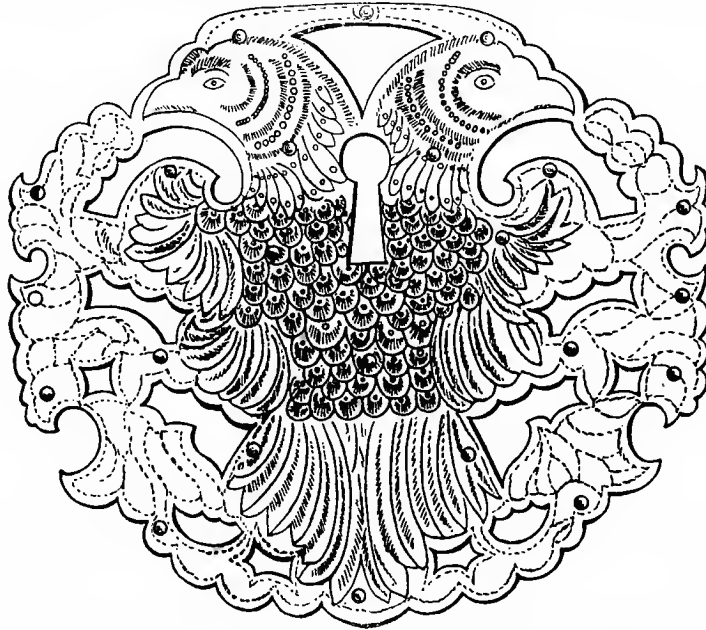
AN OLD CAPE GARDEN



A WATER GARDEN

she felt cold in the short but wet Cape winter. Tall, graceful, brass coffee-pots with three legs, standing on a small base above little komvoors, were common in a land where coffee was the drink of the people and stood ready for every comer.

There is a great charm about the massive wine-beakers, in brass or copper, which were used in the wine-pressing as a measure. With all our boasted civilization we have not improved on many of the common utensils of our forefathers. Modern wine-making is a very prosaic business too, though machinery has its own romance, and the



Lock-plate on a chest from Tulbagh

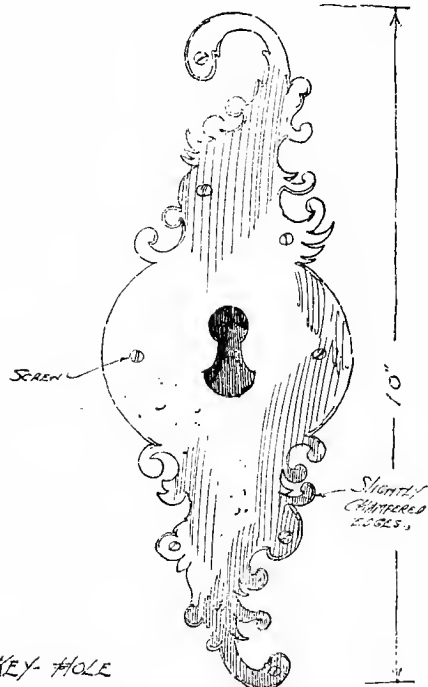
old methods of crushing the grapes by dancing on them cannot be defended on hygienic grounds. These old wine measures have a grace which appeals to us.

Tall cuspidors of brass or of a white metal which contained a measure of silver were found in every room of an old Cape house, but are now difficult to procure.

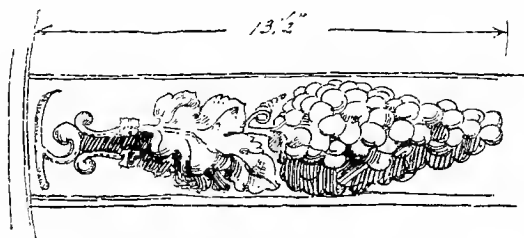
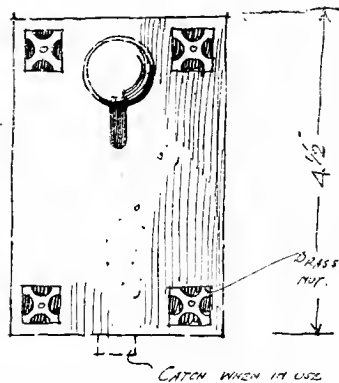
The old armoires and chests have very fine hinges and locks, and the perforated brasswork which is used to decorate the latter is exceptionally good. The designs are usually simple and conventional, but heraldic designs are not uncommon—such as the double-headed eagle on the old chest from the Tulbagh district. Graceful crutch-handles and finger-plates on the homestead doors, the iron hinges,

BRASS FITTINGS & FURNITURE.

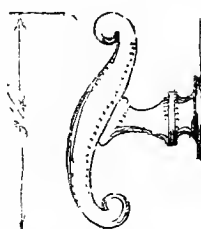
BRASS
FOOT BOLT.



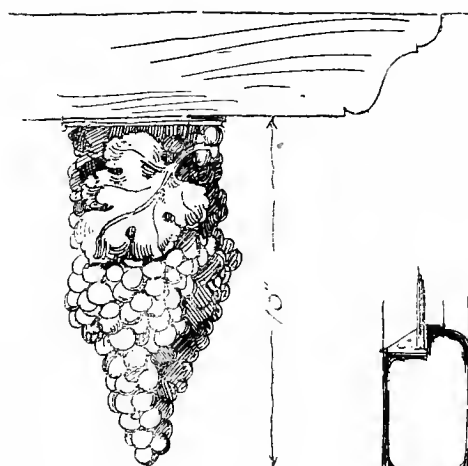
KEY-HOLE
ESCUTCHEON.



BRASS FASTENER TO
WIRE VAT.

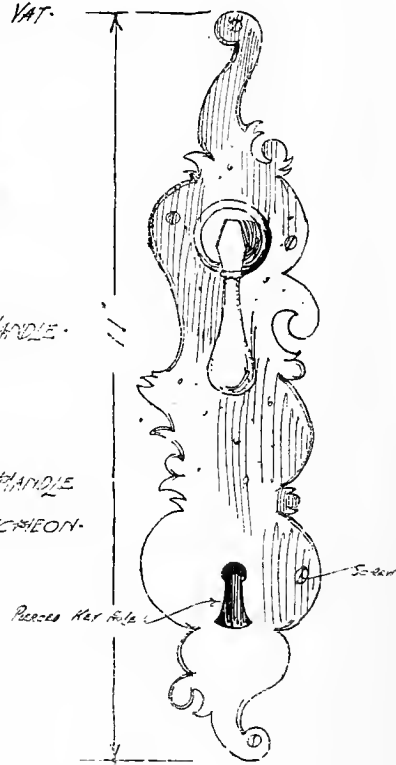


TYPICAL DOOR HANDLE.

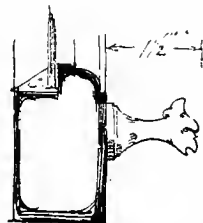


BUNG
TO WIRE VAT.

DOOR HANDLE
& ESCUTCHEON.

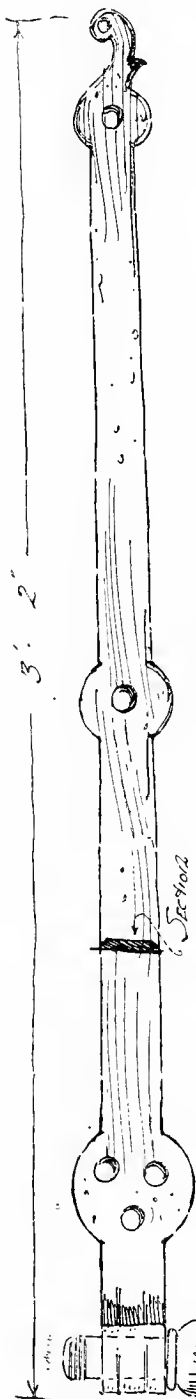


BRASS
SASH LIFT.

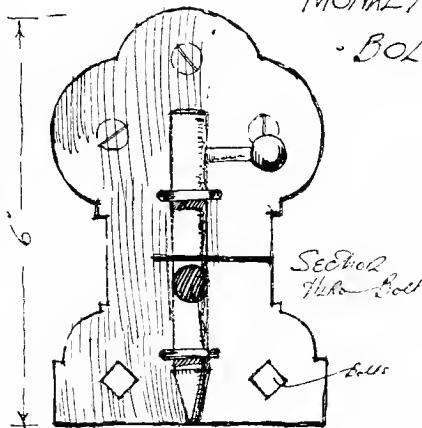
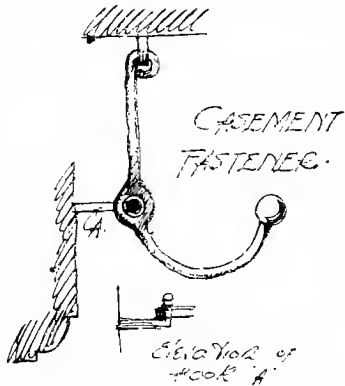


RENNES
1885 & 1886
1896

WROUGHT IRON FURNITURE.



STRAP HINGE.

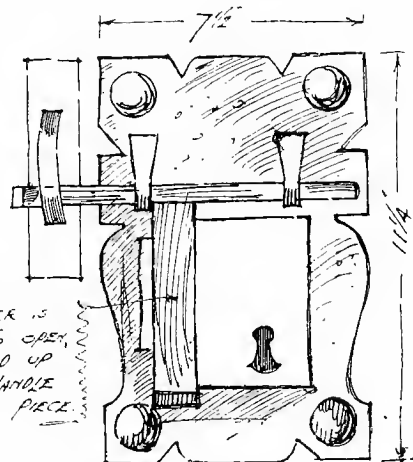


EXTERNAL BOLT.



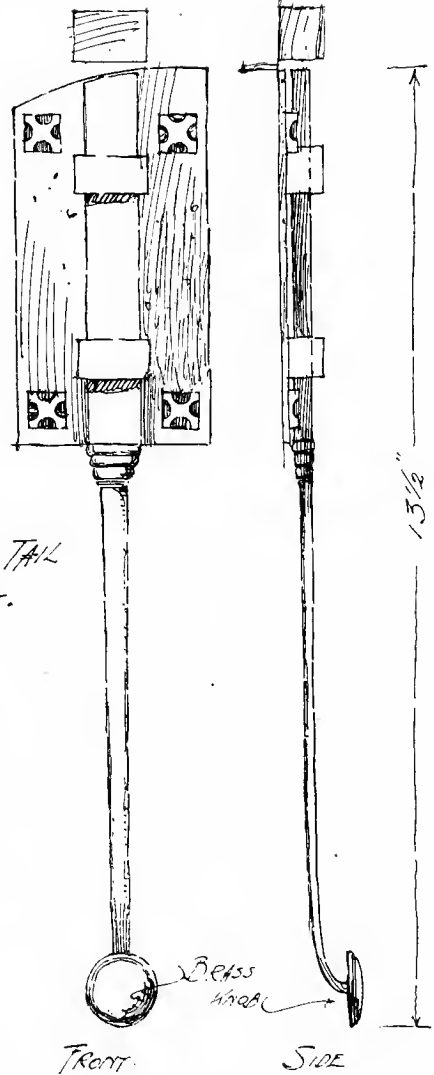
PLAN OF HINGE.

THIS MEMBER IS LOCKED - TO OPEN, IT IS PULLED UP & FORMS HANDLE TO CROSS PIECE.



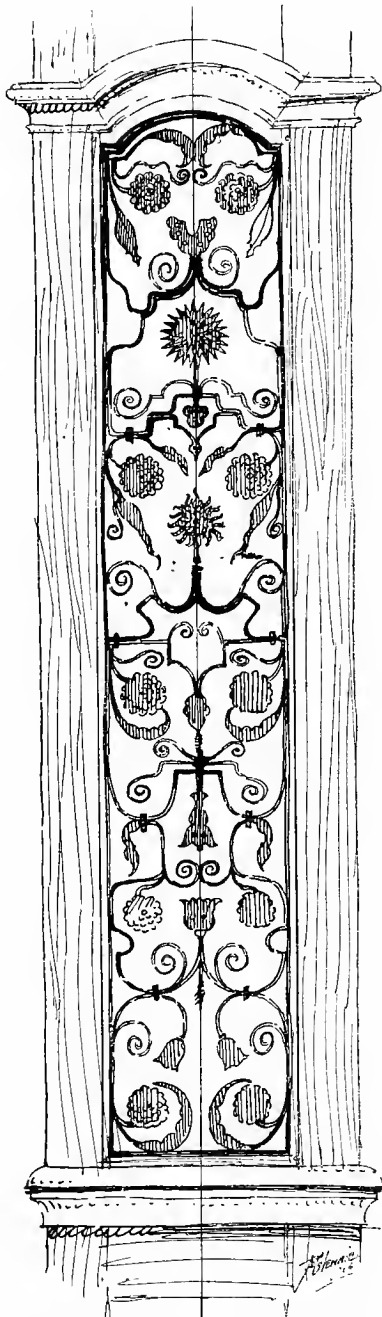
WROUGHT IRON LOCK & BOLT.

FIG. 10
16
NEW & CO.



FRONT.

SIDE.



WROUGHT IRON GRILLE -

-FROM ELSENBURG -

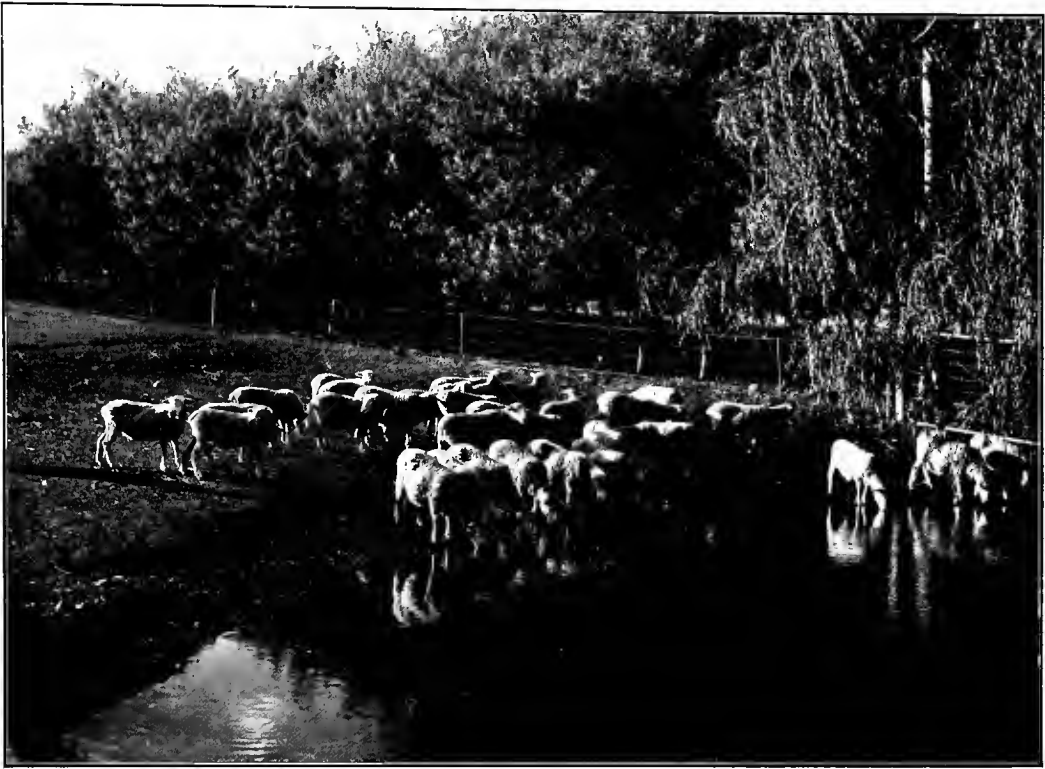
NOW AT GROOTE SCHUUR



hasps, and bolts on the teak shutters, all testify that the old Cape metal-worker was no mean craftsman.

On many of the tall armoires the silver handles and escutcheons still remain, though a great number have vanished. It is said that they were made of the silver money brought from the East in the homeward-bound ships by the sailors and passengers who forgot that it would not pass currency in the Netherlands. Much of this silver-work is very fine, but in the absence of marks it is difficult to distinguish between that made at the Cape and that brought out from Holland. Other examples are rough and simple. Copper entered largely into the kitchen plenishings of the Cape. Fine copper kettles and mortars were made, and great preserving-pans in which the early huisvrouw cooked the conserves of naartje, green fig, water-melon, and Seville orange for which the Cape is still famous. Copper doors to the munition rooms at the Castle have recently been found under a blanket of paint.

There were no textile factories in old Cape Town—the 'Guinea linen, taffachelas, baftas, chintz, salmpouris, negro cloth', and the other fabrics of which we read in the Archives being brought from Europe and the East. Ceramics were almost equally unrepresented, though there was a tile-factory and a Company's 'Pottenbakkerij' at the top of the present Queen Victoria Street. Rough pottery had been made by the natives for untold ages, pots of an ovoid shape, not unlike those found in the prehistoric tombs of Egypt, having come to light beneath the present city of Cape Town; but, though graceful pots and bowls are made to this



ON A SHEEP FARM



FRIESLAND CATTLE



HARVESTING



WHITE WATSONIAS IN THE DROSTDY GARDEN, TULBAGH

day by the Basuto people, no manufacture of china has ever been established. China in large quantities was brought from the East in the days of the Company, and until recently every house of any importance held treasures of Ming or old Imari. The large services of blue and white Nankin were bought up by the dealers and dispersed when the love of modernity seized the people, and at the same time were scattered the fine collections of cut and engraved Dutch and English glass which had been the pride of previous generations. Sometimes these calamities were unavoidable—when a wave of financial depression passed over the land, for instance, or when the application of the Roman-Dutch law of inheritance entailed the sale of a property with its effects. Whatever the cause, the result is equally to be regretted—and by none more than the descendants of the old burghers who gathered about them household treasures of such dignity and beauty. There are, however, signs of an awakening, to be welcomed even if it come at the eleventh hour, when much has been carried away from the Cape which can never be replaced.

It will be noticed that the Cape lesser artists were almost exclusively workers in metal and wood—and not much in the latter if we except Anton Anreith's carved pulpits and sundry fine fanlights and doors. It is true that some old embroideries are found here and there—closely quilted bed-coverlets and little caps, samplers, and beadwork of a fineness which must quickly have worn out the eyes of the workers—but we may look in vain for the embroidered curtains and bed-hangings of Tudor or Jacobean England or the altar-frontals of lands where worship and church ceremonies take a more ornate form than that permitted by Calvin. The cause of the comparative dearth of fine needlework may be traced to a climate in which it is more essential to air a house than to curtain the windows, to a church which looked somewhat coldly on decorative art, and perhaps, in part, to the facility with which beautiful embroideries and chintzes could be obtained from the East by the homeward-bound fleets.

That no carpet industry was established is to be attributed to the Dutch housewife's affection for her floors of highly polished red tiles or squares of blue slate.

XXIV

THE LAND ITSELF

IT is not the beauty of her old houses alone which marks South Africa as blessed among the countries of the earth. Long before these houses were planned or built, long before Drake from his ship looked upon the land that he passed and hailed it as fair, its mountains flushed wine-red at sunset, its high veld turned from green to umber and from umber to green with the changing seasons, its lilies and ixias and heaths glowed on hill-side and plain. Man has built himself cities where once the eland and quagga browsed, cities with factories and theatres and hotels; but over them brood the unchanging mountains, around them still grow the flowers, above them shine the South African stars in their undimmed radiance, reducing to pin points the electric lights of the busy streets.

As you drive out of Cape Town by the new road which cuts across the shoulder of the Devil's Peak on its way to Groote Schuur, there is a corner at which you should pause and look down on the town lying in the valley behind you. If it chances to be at sunset the white houses will gleam like pearls in the purple dusk which has gathered at the foot of Table Mountain while the summit is yet aflame. Seen from the height they are softened and made lovely, until it is no longer Cape Town on which you look but some magic city of mediaeval legend, and the long ripples of the bay are the waters which lap the golden walls of lost Atlantis.

Across the Flats the mountains are rose-crested, and around their feet in September is the glow of fruit-blossom. This is the district of the peach and apricot and melon, of grapes hanging heavily from the vines and of the vintage, of loquats and figs and strawberries, and of plums and pears in all their varieties. Naartjes, oranges, and apples grow freely, too; but these come to greater perfection in some districts of the Transvaal, where there is both greater heat and greater cold than at the Cape. The oranges from the Rustenburg district are magnificent; the trees attain a great height and breadth there and bear enormous crops. It is difficult to describe the beauty of a Transvaal orange-orchard. Natal, with the firstfruits of the tropics in her blood, is famous for her bananas and pine-apples, her mangoes



ARUM LILIES



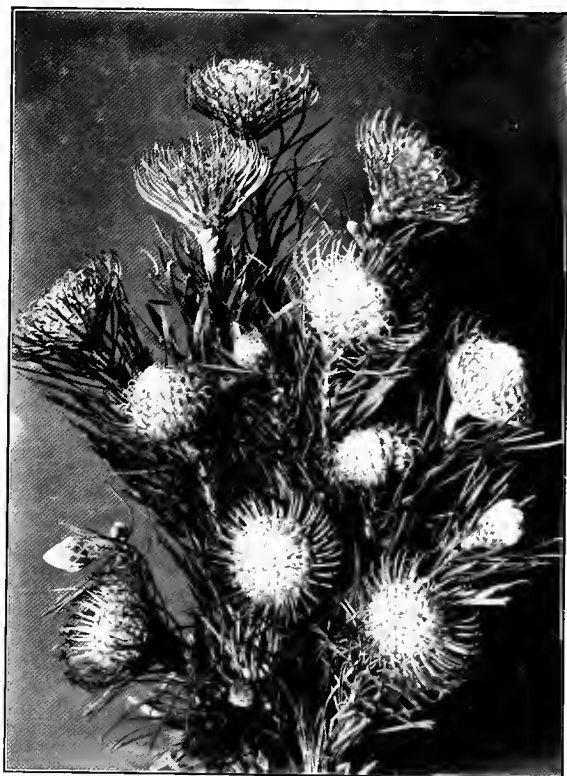
ORNITHOGALUM AT TULBAGH



ERICA MONSONIANA



ERICA LONGIFOLIA



LEUCOSPERMUM LINEARE



ANEMONE CAPENSIS

and pawpaws and limes, and grenadillas, though the small sweet pine-apple grows freely in some of the eastern districts of the Cape Province also. The fruit-market of Durban affords an example which some of the older South African towns might well follow. A great deal of South African fruit is sun-dried and exported to Europe.

Not by fruit alone does the South African cultivator of the soil live. Maize thrives, especially in the districts of summer rains, and so does lucerne. Certain areas, in the Cape and elsewhere, are given up entirely to wheat, other districts are beginning to grow cotton with great success, in others again excellent tobacco is grown—Turkish in some parts of the country and Virginian in others. In Natal tea and sugar are cultivated over large areas—during the year 1919 sugar to the value of £360,437 increase over the amount exported in 1918 was sent from South Africa. The country is still finding out what she can do, and with her varieties of climate and her great natural advantages there are not many things withheld from her.

It is not suggested that there are no drawbacks. Sometimes there are droughts and sometimes there are floods, and then the farmer is as afflicted as in any other land ; but, take it for all in all, South Africa is a fine country with a fine climate in which to cultivate the fruits of the earth. The sheep and cattle farms lie for the most part in the interior of the country, and, though this land may be less picturesque than the districts near the coast, the flocks and herds thrive on it. South Africa exports wool and meat to the ends of the earth, together with her wattle-bark and hides, her eggs, ostrich-feathers, oats, maize, and jams. Great fortunes have been dug out of her earth—gold and diamonds, coal and copper, her horn of plenty has indeed been filled to overflowing. She has her wide bare spaces as well as her fruitful farms, her empty river-beds, and her parched Karoo. But even here, one shower, when at last it falls, weaves a spell under which the dried-up veld is transformed into a glowing carpet of wild flowers, as lovely as the orange-groves of the Transvaal or the vineyards of the Cape.

The scenery of South Africa varies, as we should expect it to vary in a land which extends from the temperate to the tropical zones—a land of great mountain ranges, of the wide high veld and the richly wooded low veld and coast-line. The magnificent peaks of the Drakensberg and the crowning glory of the Mont aux Sources in Natal are as splendid as the sheer grey wall of Table Mountain or the snow-capped Drakenstein of the south ; the forests of the Knysna hold as great a charm as the glorious scenery of the Wood Bush in the Transvaal. From the high levels various streams find their way to the sea and in many of these streams trout have been naturalized

and grow to a great size, notably in the Mooi River and in some of the streams in the Western Province. Trout-fishing is fast being established. The sea, too, yields a rich harvest ; South African soles are as good as any in the world, and the stock-fish, haarder, elf, klip-fish, and very many other varieties compare favourably with the fish of Europe. But Europe has not the klip-kous, the delicately flavoured shell-fish whose home is the pearly Venus's Ear Shell—the old Dutch people understand the secret of cooking it in lemon-juice and bread-crumbs until it is no longer merely food but ambrosia fit for the high gods.

South African birds have been unjustly accused of having no song. True, the melody of the nightingale is wanting, but many of the native birds have fine rich notes. Early in the morning and again at evening you may hear the Bokmakeri (*Laniarius gutturalis*) calling to his mate. He throws out a deep, sonorous cry of ' Bok, bok, bok ', on one note. Then, from some far-off tree comes a sweet soprano lilt in response—' Makeri, makeri '. The note of this bird varies with the seasons ; at one time of the year he shouts lustily for ' Peter, Peter, Peter ', neither getting nor apparently expecting any response. He is a fine, handsome bird of the shrike family—olive green above, the tail tipped with yellow, a yellow throat with a broad black collar. There are many warblers, and amongst the singers is the Cape thrush, the water-fiscal, the Bonte canary, and the sweet-voiced Seisje. The English thrush and blackbird have been introduced and are beginning to make their voices heard, while starlings have taken almost too kindly to the country. For sheer beauty it would be difficult to beat the glorious little sugar birds or sun birds, as they hover over the flowers in search of food. Of these, *Nectarinia famosa* is usually found in the neighbourhood of the Proteas, extracting the nectar from the blossoms by its long brush-tipped tongue. Its plumage is a shining malachite green, the wings and tail being black. Another species has the head and shoulders glittering green and a violet breast, but the jewel among the sun birds is *Cinnaris chalybaeus*, with the head, back, and breast of metallic green, while round its neck is a narrow collar of blue and a wider one of red. In the Transvaal flocks of the crimson-breasted fiscal (*Laniarius atrococcineus*) are often seen ; here too are found the pure white tick birds that hover over the cattle like the guardian angels which in truth they are. Then there are the gaily-clad finches, the waxbills, the flycatchers, and many more. The weaver birds are found throughout South Africa, and build their hanging nests in large colonies. The Spreeuw or glossy starling (*Anydrus morio*), a handsome chestnut-winged bird, is also found everywhere. One of the best

places for seeing the flamingo is a lagoon to the south of Saldanha Bay, recently set aside as a bird sanctuary by the efforts of Mr. J. B. Taylor.

Of South African flowers much has been written, but those who only know them from books will feel when they see them that the half had not been told unto them. Natal has her splendid flowering shrubs and trees, from the Transvaal come the glowing Barberton daisies and the yellow arum; in the eastern districts of the Cape province grow wild the blue plumbago, the scarlet George lily and many another treasure of European hothouses; at the Cape are to be seen in perfection the erica in all its variation of waxen white or pink, of crimson and scarlet and yellow; here in the Table Mountain stream gleams the red disa, while the glorious cobalt blue disa jewels the slopes, together with the agapanthus, the gold-dusted nerine and the crassula. The ditches below are filled with white arums in the winter, the wide flats are ablaze with glowing mesembryanthemum in the spring and summer. From the first shower of autumn, when in a twinkling the roadsides are gay with oxalis of every colour, to the last drought of summer, when the purple bells of the roella defy the heat, the cycle of the flowering year is complete in beauty.

The Karoo has a distinct vegetation of its own—aloes, stapelias, and a thousand queer succulents which are constructed to defy drought. In the Knysna and the northern Transvaal and other districts fine forests of native trees still exist. No two parts of South Africa resemble each other in scenery or vegetation, and yet, with all this unlikeness, no part is more typically South African than another.

Of recent years many native flowers and shrubs have been grown in gardens with great success, and the Botanic Gardens at Kirstenbosch illustrate the wisdom of cultivating and preserving the flora of the country. Perhaps, of the four provinces the gardens of the Transvaal are the most beautiful, many of them having been laid out by the architects who built the houses, in harmony with them: here, too, is found a pinkish sandstone which splits easily into large irregular slabs for paving paths, while the lawns are made of a fine grass called Florida grass, which forms an emerald carpet for a great part of the year. Both paving-stones and grass have been used with great effect by Lady Phillips in the beautiful garden of Arcadia. The gardens of Natal consist for the most part of splendid flowering trees, clumps of feathery bamboo, and shrubs growing in grass. To see Durban at its loveliest the heat of summer must be ignored for the sake of the glorious avenues of scarlet flamboyant; here, too, are hedges of crimson hibiscus and pergolas heaped high with golden allamanda or the cream trumpets of Beaumontia, and here the

Bougainvillea, which grows throughout South Africa, sends long shoots up tall trees from which it falls again in a shower of beauty.

At the Cape the stone-pines and the roses and the sweet homely garden flowers have a restful loveliness, and the gardens laid out by Mr. Arderne at The Hill and Mrs. Carter at Bishops court are amongst the most beautiful in South Africa, with their wonderful mountain background of grey rocks and wooded kloofs. In some old Cape gardens are hedges of scarlet pomegranate and waxen myrtle, of blue plumbago and pink or white oleander, pleasant features in the setting of the old houses.

The story of the expansion to the northward which has resulted in the Union of South Africa is known to every one. Before the eighteenth century dawned Stellenbosch and French Hoek had been founded ; then, with the need for more farms, the Land of Waveren, now Tulbagh, was colonized ; then, in 1745, Swellendam, and in 1786 Graaff Reinet. Here the colonists were near the Kaffir border, and forts were built for troops—of these Fort Frederick has developed into the town of Port Elizabeth, and Grahamstown, founded in 1812 as the military head-quarters, is now a thriving educational centre with fine schools, St. Andrew's College and others.

In 1836 came the Great Trek, when many Dutch farmers from the border moved northward, a migration which resulted eventually in the formation of the Transvaal and Orange Free State. The first Natal settlement was in 1823 when an English company, formed to trade with the natives, was granted the land on which Durban now stands, the town being founded in 1835. Pietermaritzburg, where a church was built by the Boers to commemorate their victory over Dingaan, was called after the two leaders, Gerrit Maritz and Piet Retief.

Of the newer South African towns also, every one knows how Kimberley came into being, on the site of the diamond mines which were found at a time when the country lay under deep depression owing to drought and other causes. Then came the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand, a few miles from Pretoria, and the town of Johannesburg sprang up. Large houses were built and beautiful gardens laid out, but its crown is the Picture Gallery, built by Sir Edwin Lutyens, where the fine collection of modern pictures, gathered together through the inspiration of Lady Phillips, is nobly housed.

It is a great land, whether you see it from Table Mountain or Meintje's Kop.

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